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The Native Son Who Loses His Identity

PREFACE

A love story and the idiosyncrasies of a Southern District.

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The Native Son Who Loses His Identity

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Dedicated to my daughter, Mrs. R. E. B. Hall, who is a "Go-Getter" in life.

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CHAPTER I

I was born in the Old Palmetto State and lived there until I was three years old, when my parents moved to the "succor" state that produced the martyred Lincoln; the orator Douglas; the two old War horse Generals—Logan and Grant, the latter who made that notable saying, we will accomplish the fete, if it takes all summer. But the statesman vein in this state has been pinched out ever since.

Illinois is a way station on the westwtard course of empire, in fact, the last stop before you cross the Mississippi river. It has a population of about six million of people, about all of whom can say, fondly, "Grandfather came from some other part of the country."

Illinois is a deep black state with a ten to fifteen foot soil, which can raise twenty foot corn stalks, and can put a pauper, farmer into the automobile class in three crops, if he is industrious.

It is the third state in the Union in population, wealth and manufacturers. The first in agricultural products and railroads; second in coal, third in oil, the second in college students and the first in the production of beefsteaks and bacon. It reaches from the lower edge of the frozen North to the upper edge of the Sunny South. In fact spring begins in the South when they are cutting ice in the North. For this reason the people of the state vary greatly in temperament, customs, habits, politics. Hogs and corn make the farmers so wealthy in the North that they can afford a Pierce-Arrow car every year. The Southern part has a different soil. Instead of being black it is of the strawberry roan color. Here oil and coal have been found in great quantities and the poor farmer instead of trying to fatten a little red pig can now order a $15 breakfast of bacon in Paris each morning. Chicago attends to the task of

increasing the State's population. There are no favorite or native sons in this state. They don't have to be measured according to ther ancestors, they believe that a "man's a man for ah that."

They all have to be shown here. The Mayflower does not cut much of a figure here. It is merit and merit alone that counts.

Believe me, friend reader, the Universe pays a man with the coin of his own conscience.

When a fellow, big or little, goes into the dark alleys of the poor and picks out some sad, hungry soul, and whispers a word of courage, loans a helping hand, you will find, if you look closely, that this man is always in excellent company, even when alone.

True happiness corresponds with almost mathematical accuracy to our ability to help humans up the hill.

Genuine happiness is a by-product of self-forgetful service to others.

When your pulses quicken at the sight of sadness, when your blood courses faster in the presence of want, when your heart softens out of sympathy, you are a safe man to accompany.

The zone of hospitality has moved westward with its cosmopolitan inhabitants. Its home used to be located South of the Mason and Dixon line, but after slavery was abolished, it behooved the Southern resident to recoup his shattered fortune. The war left nothing but desolation behind it. The large plantations had been devastated of all of their productiveness and the men coming back from the war had nothing but their own efforts to rebuild their homes and to get their land in shape to raise cotton.

They had no slaves to help them and no money to make any improvements. It is no wonder that their hospitality had suddenly slipped from them.

It is almost impossible for a poor man to be hospitable. He is after the dollar to meet the necessities of life. Working along this line and giving the dollar of our dadies a hard chase, they naturally became imbued with the idea that obtaining

money and hoarding it is the chief aim in life.

That is the reason, chiefly, that the noted Southern hospitality has almost entirely disappeared from the South. They are money mad, if you do not believe it, just make a trip South of the Mason and Dixon line and live for a year or so, and you will find out, that such is the fact.

The West is now the most hospitable part of these United States.

My father and mother were prone to make comparisons between their home place in Illinois to their former home in South Carolina and it was always in disparagement to the Succor State.

We had lived in our present home for about five years. Father had been blessed with abundant crops of corn and made money off from his "Sorrell" pigs.

His one hundred and sixty acres were paid for. He had built a fine 8-room house with a fine large barn to store his grain and to house his stock and he had considerable money in the bank. He was looked upon by his neighbors as a very industrious and upright man. In fact, he had the confidence of the whole community.

He and mother had a longing to go back to their old home on a visit. So after harvest, they left the family, consisting of four of us boys and four girls to keep house and take care of the farm while they were gone. I was the youngest of the bunch.

They made the trip and on their return, father was interviewed by the editor of the local paper about his trip.

He said, "South Carolina is a state of perpetual irritation, situated between Georgia and North Carolina, and somewhere between the Revolution and the Civil War. It is the fightinist State in the Union, and is the unsafest spot between the Atlantic and the Pacific in which to discuss the Emancipation Proclamation or to edit a paper with a trenchant pen.

It contains about 30,000 square miles, is shaped like a five-cent cut of pie and has nearly 2,000,000 people, including negroes, of which there are about one half of the number, also some few Chinese and a darn few Republicans and they are

only Republican, so as to get the Federal appointments during a Republican administration.

Although the population is about 50-50 white and black, still one white man when he gets mad can make a hundred negroes go-a-way back and sit down or else seek a change of climate without waiting for the first train.

South Carolina has always been noted for its nervous disposition and its willingness to rise up and smite the Universe on all occasions.

This State made it hot for the British during the Revolution, but General Marion soon made them look like a Republican in Wilson's administration. She helped to win the Revolution, but during Jackson's administration, she got peeved and threatened to take her doll rags and go home. In 1861, she was the first to commence hostilities. My idea about the Civil War is that South Carolina and Massachusetts ought to have been allowed to fight out the Civil War and let all the other states been the on-lookers.

South Carolina had two severe shakes, one was the earthquake that partially destroyed Charleston and the other Senator Ben Tillman.

Cotton, rice and sweet potatoes are the chief products. It also supplies large quantities of turpentine and resin. It begins where the Atlantic Ocean stops on the east, about seven feet below high water, and for many miles inland it is so moist that the planters keep life savers handy on their plows. It has numerous fine old towns, but the population peters out in the western mountains, where the people eat clay instead of ice cream and lobster and empty the hook worms out of their Sunday shoes by pounding the soles with a club. There are three religions, Protestant, Catholic and Democratic. Between the Savannah and the Pee Dee Rivers, John C. Calhoun is still the greatest man man in the world and history closes in 1865.

It is last in the list of states in the point of education and cotton mills are spreading out all over the state like a heavy rash.

Charleston is the largest city and it is a beautiful petrified one at that.

One of the greatest drawbacks to the state is, that they cling to that old theory of Native Son. No one has any business in the state, if he is not a native son and if he is, he must believe in Andrew Jackson."

"I suppose that you came back home, here, well satisfied that our state is not the worst place to live in, in the world?" said the editor.

"Well, old Illinois is good enough for me. I will take the snow storms and the cyclones in preference to the boll weevil and the selfish native son theory that permeates the old Palmetto State," replied the father.

CHAPTER II

By the way, I will tell you our family name. It is Butler. We are no kin of Gen. Ben Butler, who stole the spoons down in Louisiana nor Senator Marion Butler, who can make the Democrats get under cover down in North Carolina the quickest of any Republican that has ever lived in the state. They do not love him, the least bit and they say very sarcastic things about him when he is not around. My name is Frank Butler.

The people of Illinois are very progressive. They believe in education and don't publish it from the house tops like some of our Southern brethren. They want the education that will be worth while to the youths of the land, so they can use it in after life. The farmer boys of the "succor" state are the best educated in the land. About every one of the boys attend college and get their sheepskins. But they have different ideas of education than a great many other people. They send their children to the public schools and get what education they can there and then the boy and girl is sent to a college to be instructed in the particular line of work they are fitted for. If a boy is suited to the professions and his mental capacity is fitted to take on a classical course he is sent to a college of that kind. If his ideas trend to engineering, to chemistry or farming or to whatever line he is adapted for, he is sent to the school where they make a specialty of that particular calling.

They also believe in athletics but not in detriment to their regular studies.

They believe that a man should be robust in health, have a good sound body in order to go up against the trials and tribulations that they are sure to meet in this life of uncertainties.

Our whole family were educated at the graded schools and also at different colleges and seminaries.

My inclinations were along the line of chemicals, for that reason I was sent to the Illinois State University and took a four years' course in chemistry. When I graduated, I secured a position with the Dupont people at Hopewell, Va. Shortly after I went to Hopewell, war was declared against Germany by the United States. I was all enthusiasm and wanted to enlist but the government would not take me as they considered that I could do far more good for my country by working for the powder company.

During the summer, it was the habit of some of us employees to run down to Wrightsville Beach and spend a week at a time. Mrs. DuPont had taken a cottage there and of course, we were often invited up there to parties, etc.

The first summer that I was down there, there were a bevy of Vassar Seminary girls there, camping out. They were frequent visitors at the DuPont cottage, and as it happened, I met them there and was introduced to them. Most of them were from the North, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. But there were two from South Carolina. One from Charleston and the other, Miss Belle Sanford, was from Sumpter, S. C.

That was the town in which I was born and naturally I was drawn more especially towards her than any of the rest. Belle was not only a beautiful young lady but she was very intelligent. She was one that would be picked out of a crowd of young ladies for her intelligent looks as well as for her beauty. Her easy and graceful manners and dignified bearing were assets to her other accomplishments. But for all of that she was "chuck full" of the spice of the devil. She had a sort of Castillian look about her. She had jet black hair and eyes, while her skin was almost transparent white with red cheeks. She was above the height of the ordinary women and well developed. She was quick on foot and had a very winning smile. She was an adept in repartee, was well up on authors and had a good knowledge of history and current events. She always had a pleasant word for everybody, but was no hypocrite. She despised can't of all kinds and what she abhorred the most of anything was the old worn out theme of Native Son. She believed that if a person was good, virtuous, patriotic and self-

supporting, whether rich or poor, he was to be taken at his full value.

In the town of Sumpter, there are some very wealthy as well as aristocratic families and the society there is way up in G, but they all pride themselves upon their ancestors, undoubtedly forgetting that we all are descendants of Adam and Eve. When Belle heard anyone discoursing upon their ancestry or Native Son subjects, she became tired and disgusted.

Upon one occasion, when the discussion became quite animated upon these subjects, she broke into the discussion and remarked; that it put her in mind of a story. A figurative John Bull remarked to his sons: "Why, ours is an old family. One of our ancestors was knighted by Henry VII for stealing cattle from the Scotch, some time in the fifteenth century. I am tracing up the lineage, and I believe we are all Barons. I expect to get the title confirmed, and then each of you boys must sell himself to a beautiful, wealthy American girl for from 75,000 to 250,000 pounds. Under the rose, it will help the stock greatly, for your mother was a barmaid. Things are working alright, my lads. Our conquest of the United States still goes on."

There was a silence that was oppressive when she had finished. "Then you don't believe in the Native Son and Noted Lineage?" remarked an elderly lady.

"Decidely, No. Why, look at our families of the wealthy here in our own little city, where they have married and intermarried in order to keep the wealth in the families. Why, their descendants are degenerating all the time. I dare any of you, to show me a young man from the wealthy families, who can be compared to his father or grandfather in ability or intelligence. And if things continue this way, we will have a very sorry lot of wealthy people here in the next fifty years, if the money has not all been squandered by the non-go-getters —the descendants of the rich. I think that a young lady or gent, whether rich or poor should select his or her own life partner without any family entanglements or pressure. For my part, I shall be guided along the lines I have mentioned, if

I am ever so fortunate as to be selected by any clean cut young man."

"You always had very peculiar ideas," remarked an old lady, who had a son, that she wished might be a favorite of Belle.

"I suppose you would even marry one of those "blue-bellied" Yanks, if he was respectable, which I think would be next to impossible to find, if you loved him?"

"They are not as hard to find as you might suppose, but, I certainly would, if he was a respectable and refined gentleman," answered Belle.

"Will wonders never cease? You a daughter of one of the produest families in the Old Palmetto State and give utterance to such sentiments," remarked another lady of the Cod Fish Aristocracy, with a defiant toss of her head.

"That all comes from your attending that Yankee Seminary," exclaimed another lady.

"Well, No, yet partially so. I always believed in the theory but after attending school up North for four years, I had my theory thoroughly demonstrated to my entire satisfaction. But I am not saying the Southern boys are not gentlemen, but it would be to their advantage to get wives from away from home, even if they have to marry one of your hated Yanks.

They are nice people up North, just as nice as can be found anywhere on the face of the globe, but money and lineage or Native Son does not cut the figure up there that it does in South Carolina."

"Well, have it your own way. Let's go on with the dance," spoke up one of the young men, and thus the argument was dropped.

Frank Butler and Belle Sanford became almost boon companions at the beach. They were to be found together, daily, playing tennis, boat riding, bathing or horseback riding. Generally, where you found the one you would find the other.

Frank' vacation passed too quickly for both of them. They were congenial in tastes and appeared that nature intended each for the other.

However, the time came, when Frank was to leave for his daily work.

"Well, old scout, will I see or hear any more from you, or is this just a common occurrence with you," said Belle.

"How can you ask such a question, when you know positively that I have enjoyed myself with you, as I never have with any young lady in my life. I do not flirt, that is something I am not guilty of, and I hope, in fact, I know that you believe, down deep in your own heart that I have the greatest regard and respect for you, and I think my feelings are reciprocated by you," said Frank.

"Well, let it go at that. Are you going to write to me?" asked Belle.

"Surely, if you desire it, and I was on the point of asking you if I might," replied Frank.

"Certainly, I will be pleased to correspond with you and then I can see if you are as entertaining and amusing as a writer as a talker," remarked Belle.

She went to the train and saw him off.

After his departure Wrightsville seemed to have lost all its attraction for her, and her companions were won't to jolly her about being hard hit by Cupid's dart. When she told them she had a high regard for Frank but there was nothing serious between them. But notwithstanding her spirits commenced to droop, she did not have the accustomed pep as formerly, before the advent of Frank. She actually was nauseated with the attractions the beach offered. Finally, she told the girls she was going home as she did not feel the least bit well. The girls took the hint as they well knew what the matter was with her. Two of the young ladies accompanied her as she insisted upon their so doing. After a few days at home, she appeared to regain her usual lively dispositions. The young ladies soon found out what caused her spirits to be revived. She had received a very long and interesting letter from Frank It had been delayed as it was forwarded from the beach. She hastened to answer it, and in it, she gave him an urgent invitation to visit her, in the near future.

Letters were exchanged daily for about a month, when

Belle received a letter from him, stating that he would be down the following Saturday and would stay over Sunday.

It is needless to say that Belle was down to the train with her car, to meet him. It was a joyful meeting for both, and their eyes spoke a language that neither dare to speak. When they got into the car, Frank told her to take him to the best hotel.

"No, you are not going to a hotel, you are my guest and you are going to stay at my home, while you are here," replied Belle.

"What will your parents think or what will the people say?" exclaimed Frank.

"My parents are perfectly willing and indeed quite anxious to have you as our guest, and I care not what the old gossips have to says as they can't injure me. When people are true, consciencious and truthful, they can look the whole world in the face aand tell them to go to," replied Belle.

Frank could not resist crowding up closer to her after this speech. Arriving at her home, she introduced Frank to her father and mother in the following words: "Father and mother, look on one of God's noblemen. I know him to be that. He is a good intelligent, manly man, who is not ashamed to let people know that he works. He was born here in this town, but he was raised in the North and there learned that work is not disgraceful. He is college bred and his parents are wealthy as any who live in our city. But when they left South Carolina, they had barely enough to ge to their present home and that is only about a period of twenty years.

They did this by industrious habits and by frugality. They have laid by an abundance of this world's goods and a family of eight children, four boys and four girls have a college education.

I repeat, he is a manly man, worthy to associate with the best people on earth. "There is nothing serious between us," and as she said this there was a slight tremor in her voice. "But we are the best of friends, and tonight, at the informal party, I want him to meet all of our guests.

What I have said may be embarrassing to Mr. Butler, but I tell you these things so that you can spike all the cod fish

aristocracy from saying anything that might be out of place."

Imagine, reader, how Frank must have felt as Belle made this little spiel to her parents.

"Daughter, we have never known of your being deceived in your estimate of people. You have a "canny" gift along that line. We cordially and sincerely extend our best wishes as well as our hospitality to your friend, here, Mr. Frank Butler," at the same time the father extending his hand and giving him a hearty hand shake. Mrs. Sanford did the same.

"Perhaps it would be a good idea to call the servant and have Mr. Butler's baggage taken to his room and at the same time escort him to it."

"Have the servant hring up the baggage and I will show him his room," said Belle. Suiting the action to the word she told Frank to accompany her. As they started up the stairway, Frank took hold of her arm to assist her as he did so, she gave his arm a press and crowded it up against hers. He whispered to her, "Do you mean that?"

She answered "yes."

When they got to the room, she pushed it open and told him when he had performed his toilet to come down into the reception room and they would go into dinner.

"Just to think of it. She loves me as very few women ever loved, and I love her with a love that can't be measured, which I never knew before that I was capable of," thought Frank as he prepared for dinner.

CHAPTER III

At the dinner table Mr. Sanford engaged Frank in conversation on current events, scientific subjects and politics. He found him well versed upon all the different themes and he backed up his theories with good solid arguments. Some of which were antagonistic to the views of Mr. Sanford but he could not help admiring the young man for his erudition.

He also found that he was not egotistical, but appeared to believe as he argued.

Frank knew that he was treading on almost forbidden ground when he argued on politics, but he believed in being honest, no matter what the consequences. After dinner they repaired to the old shady porch, when Mr. Sanford passed him a box of cigars. "Thanks, I do not use tobacco in any shape."

"You don't even smoke cigarettes? That is strange for a young man in these times," remarked Mr. Sanford.

"I tried to smoke once, and I gave it up in disgust and never tried it again, as it made me deathly sick,, replied Frank.

"You are better off by abstaining from the tobacco habit. It is a filthy one and obnoxious to a great many, but with me I commenced when I was young and the habit grew on me and at my age I find it a great solace and I have my serious doubts whether I could quit it now," replied Sanford.

While thus engaged, Belle made her appearance and asked her father if he would excuse Frank for a while as she desired him to accompany her in the car, down town, as she had some errands to do and she wished to show him the town.

He replied "certainly."

On the way down town, Belle informed Frank that there was to be an informal reception at her home that evening. You will meet about all the aristocracy of our little city, both young and old. Be prepared for all kinds of quizzing, be natural

and answer their questions in your accustomed natural style and never mind the results. If it hurts them, they will have to stand it. You are Southern born but Northern raised and your ideas are broad as compared with theirs.

Frank was the observed of all. He appeared to be the whole show. Whisperings were caught flying about that she was engaged to Frank, as they were observed in the car.

The informal reception was on. The cream of Sumpter's aristocratic society was present 'en masse' and Frank ran the gauntlet of being introduced down the line, where fashionable ladies dressed with decollette dresses and stylish men all dolled up in full dressed suits.

As he passed along down the line, whispering remarks were made, such as, "He is good looking, if he is a Yank;" "He knows how to wear his clothes, and dresses in good taste, if he is from the North;" "He looks intelligent;" "He has graceful manners;" "Wonder, if he is a good conversationalist?" "Do you suppose he and Belle are engaged?" etc.

There was a soda water jerker present, by the name of Sol Haines, who was employed at the most popular drug store in the city, where they made a specialty of soda water, soft drinks of all kinds and ice cream. It was the popular place for the young people to meet for refreshments of this kind. It was also a great hangout for the wealthy men in town, who had nothing to do but put in their time. It was also a great place for gossip.

Haines had been here for something over a year and he had ingratiated himself into the favor both of the ladies and gents, to such an extent, that he was invited to all the social gatherings of Sumpter's Four Hundred.

Sol Haines was one of those frisky, flip, fawning, flossie, four-flusher sycophants that can be found in most any community. He was a Georgia "cracker." He had been in South Carolina several years and he thought that the state would go into premature decay, if he were to leave it.

As we have mentioned this drug store was the mecca for the fashionable society and the wealthy and prominent men of the town as they got their daily papers here. Sol Haines

had brains enough to agree with them and being so well known and a good dresser, quite a glib talker but only superficial, he wormed himself into being invited out to afternoon teas, etc.

On account of his advent into society, his cranium commenced to enlarge, and the thought permeated his addled brain that he could have his choice of the wealthy, marriageable young ladies of the city.

He had tried his best to get in with Belle, but she was too clever to offend him, but by shrewd manipulation he had never been able to call on her or to accompany her to any of the society doings. She was able to read his shallowness and she knew that he was a sort of a polished non-entiety.

Of course, he was at this reception. He told some of the swell young men "that he would show up this blooming Yank, who had come down South to steal one of their most beautiful and accomplished young ladies. Now watch me."

Some of his friends suggested that possibly he had better be a little careful as they believed Frank Butler would more than be a match for him. However, he would not listen to their kindly advice.

"Not on your life, I will make him expose his ignorance, and I think he is too cowardly to resent any insult."

"Well, it is up to you, if you think you are heavy enough calibre, go to it," remarked a young man, who did not take very much stock in him.

One of the yoiung men, who had heard Sol Haines make his boast of what he was going to do to Frank, was a special friend of Belle. He hunted her up and told her about it.

"He said those things, did he? Well, I can say, he will be afforded an opportunity to make good his boasts. I will arrange the 'setting.' I will see Frank and give him a tip, and you get Sol and some of the young men out on the veranda to smoke, and Frank and I will saunter out near them. I will frame up an excuse to leave Frank for a few minutes, this will give Sol a chance to make good his bluff," said Belle.

"Alright, my clever little schemer, you are 'Johnny on the spot' at all times," remarked her friend.

Belle hunted up Frank and told him what Sol Haines had

said, he was going to do. Now, I have fixed it with one of the young men to get Sol and some of the other young men to go out on the veranda to smoke, you and I will casually walk out onto the veranda, near them, and shortly afterwards, I will excuse myself to you for a short time and we will see if he has the nerve to insult you. Be careful and answer any of his insinuating remarks as sarcastically as you can, and if he insults you, knock the dirty cur down. It is time that Sumpter society people know what a despicable cur they are really entertaining and harboring, said Belle.

"Just as you say, my little spite-fire," said Frank.

Belle left Frank and went in search of her father and unfolded to him the whole dirty scheme of Haines. "Now, father I want you to get in a good place where you can hear all that is said and see all that happens, but upon no account, interfere in the least. You can come out upon the scene after the seance is over."

"Do you think that is the proper thing to do?" asked her father.

"I certainly do, as Sol Haines has it in his system and the sooner he is relieved of the high tension, the better it will be for all concerned," replied Belle.

"How about Frank," said Mr. Sanford.

"Never mind Frank, he will give a good account of himself, have no fears on that score. If Sol Haines ever attempts to make a pass at Frank, he will think a full blown cyclone has struck him," replied Belle.

The program was carried out in detail.

Some few minutes had elapsed after Belle had departed and Frank was standing, leaning up against the railing on the veranda, when Sol Haines slowly oozed over to him, followed by the other young men, who wanted Haines to get what was coming to him, as they surely expected him to get more than he bargained for, and another thing, down in their hearts they all despised him. Stepping up to Frank, he thus accosted him: "Well, Yank, how do you like the house party? or perhaps you are so ignorant that you do not know what a house party is?"

"My 'Cracker' friend, we have barn parties in our 'neck of

the woods' after each harvest. Our floors in our big bank barns are large and they are made of hard wood matched flooring and highly polished, but for all that we wax them before a party takes place. A series of barn parties are given by the larger farmers. We have a city orchestra and the 'elite' society of the whole community attend. For refreshments, we have a barrel of sweet cider and several bushels of the finest eating apples. Each one draws his own cider from the barrel for himself and lady partner. We have no 'cider jerker' as you people here in the South have 'soda water jerkers.' We dance till broad day light and go home in the morning," answered Frank. While Frank was peorating, audible snickers might have been heard, coming from the young men, and Sol could not have helped hearing them and undoubtedly it made him madder than he otherwise would have been. The idea of being laughed at by his own countrymen on account of remarks made by an uncouth Yank.

"Do you mean to insult me," queered Sol, brustling up.

"Why, no," remarked Frank.

"Well, you did and you need not try to crawfish, you miserable, low down Yankee cur." As he said cur, a resounding smack was heard upon the stillness of the Southern night. And where was Sol Haines, the soda water jerker? Ask of the gentle zephyrs that floated out among the trees.

He was laying prone upon the floor of the stoop with blood oozing out of his nostrils and mouth, and he was unable to get up. He was heard saying "where was I when the tornado struck?"

He was assisted to his feet by some of the young men after he came to a little. At this juncture Mr. Sanford and Belle made their appearance. Mr. Sanford told the boys to gather up the fragments of one Sol Haines and load him into an auto and take him to his boarding place.

"Now Sol Haines, you will please never venture to put your foot into my home again. You are too low down for decent people to have anything to do with, and gentlemen, you can do as you see fit, keep this little episode to yourselves or broadcast it, suit yourselves. I was apprized of this affair. How

that Haines had made his boasts what he was going to do, and, farther, I heard every word that passed and I saw the whole proceedings.

I have nothing but words of praise for Butler. He acted the part of a true chivalrous gentleman and I should have considered him to have been an arrogant coward had he not done as he did.

He has done one of the best acts for the society of this city by knocking down this low down, sneaking, cowardly piece of humanity—Sol Haines. I am through, take away the human carrion."

This all happened without any one but those that saw it, knowing anything about it.

CHAPTER IV

Fortunate is the community that has good magistrates, who have sense enough to decide cases according to law and the evidence. In some of the communities in the Palmetto State they have some men, who are magistrates who decide the cases before they go into court. They decide for the side that will be of the most advantage to them personally.

A case that happened in the community where Belle lived came under the personal presence and view of Frank Butler and Belle Sanford. This case illustrates the idea that we have just advanced.

On Sunday following what took place at Belle's home at the reception, Belle and Frank took an outing in Belle's car.

Some of the roads around there were quite narrow and with steep hills and narrow bridges. The roads wound around the hills and sometimes it was a very difficult matter for two cars to pass, in fact they could not on some of the narrow bridges. In that case one car would have to wait on the opposite side until the other car passed.

As they came around the bend and approached a narrow bridge at the foot of a winding hill, they perceived a car on the opposite side of the bridge and the driver gave the signal for them to come on as he had parked his car on the right side of the raod to await their coming.

Just as Frank and Belle had crossed the bridge and came along side of the other car, which was occupied by a young man and his wife, a big Hudson car, with six negroes in it. and a young 16 year old negro boy was driving the car, came thundering down the steep incline at a speed from 25 to 35 miles per hour. This car struck the small coupe in the rear, throwing it across the road and hitting the car in which Belle and Frank were in, doing some damage to their car. The

coupe was almost demolished and had it not been for its hitting a tree it would have gone clear down over the embankment and undoubtedly the occupants of it would have been killed. As it was, the lady had one of her limbs scraped and one of her eyes blackened. One of the negroes got out of the Hudson and ran off through the woods with a jug of whisky.

At the trial the negroes testified that they were not going over twenty-five miles per hour, while six white people testified they were going at the rate of thirty-five miles per hour. It is against the law to run over ten miles per hour when one auto passes another.

A policeman and a deputy sheriff and a garage man said the Hudson had no brakes, which is against the State law. It cost the young man $200 to get his car repaired and after hearing all the evidence, the justice looked wise and dismissed the case. Some one mentioned the fact that the wife of the magistrate and that of the land owner, for whom the negroes worked were relataives.

"If that is the way you decide cases down here, I have not much respect for your magistrates nor for the voters for putting into office such numbskulls or rascals as magistrates," remarked Frank, to Mr. Sanford after the trial.

"That is a pretty fair sample of what we have to endure, when we are so unfortunate as to have a case before them," replied Mr. Sanford.

If the hypocrites who live in the ambush of good society would only die bachelors, the world would be better for it. If the felt shoe pad would only convert his courage into a legitimate calling, valuables and virtue would be safe.

But of all the words that have ever blotted paper, none can describe that degraded black devil of despair, the ingrate—he whose thankfulness has apoplexy, whose sense of appreciation is paralyzed, whose conscience is crippled. The implacable ingrate harrows up your soul. His natural home is with the slippery, slimy inhabitants of the barnyard bogs. The mere mention of the word ingrate leaves the tongue fetid.

For some reason unknown to him, Sol Haines name was left off the social list of Sumpter's social list. And at all high society

functions he was conspicuous by his absence. It was noticed by a great number of the younger set and they wondered at it. He was not as popular at the drug store as formerly and the falling off of trade was somewhat noticeable.

Sol himself, tumbled to the fact a long time ere the young men commenced to inquire of him, "Why he was not at Mrs. DeVere's reception and at the ball given for the out-coming of Miss DuBerry?"

He gave an evasive answer to all these queeries, but at the same time it was getting on his nerves. He was in a deep quandry, why he had not been invited to these different society functions. He also noticed that the treatment accorded him by the customers, especiaaly the society people, was not as cordial as formerly, in fact it was almost frigid.

The story about his run-in with Frank Butler was not known as far as he knew, and therefore, he could not fathom the mystery.

He meditated over the matter so much that he became morose, and it had worked him into a frame of mind that it was almost impossible for him to treat the customers with the proper courtesy. The proprietor of the pharmacy began to take notice of the fact and he took Sol to task about it. In a pleasant way he asked him, "What was the matter with him?"

"Perhaps you do not want me any longer, and because your trade is falling off, you want to make me the scape-goat," said Sol.

"If you feel that way about it, just step into my private office and get your time," replied the employer.

This was the straw that broke the camel's back.

Sol now laid all his troubles on Frank Butler. He surely was the cause of his ostracism. He determined to get even with him.

He secured a position with a competing drug store and soft drink emporium, and in this position he was able to work out his scheme of revenge upon his supposed nemesis—Frank Butler.

There were a number of drug fiends in the town and Sol had been the medium through which they had been supplied

with the narcotics. They, of course, followed him to the new place. They were almost compelled to do his bidding. There was a doctor, who was an addict and he was so far steeped in drugs that he would do most anything in order to get his drug. He formerly had been one of the most prominent physicians in the city, but unfortunately for himself and the community he had become a slave to narcotics. He practically had no practice except with the tough element as he could not be trusted as he never was free of drugs.

There was another poor misguided man, who had seen better days. He was a well read aattorney and in years gone by had enjoyed a lucrative practice. The drug habit had gotten the mastery over him to such an extent that he was in its clutches.

These two men depended upon Sol to furnish them drugs.

After the trial of the auto speeders, Frank Butler went back to Hopewill. He and Belle kept up a lively correspondence and he was invited to spend the Christmas holidays at Belle's home, as she intended to give a big house party.

CHAPTER V.

To surround anything, however monstrous or ridiculous, with an air of mystery, is to invest it with a secret charm, and power of attraction which to the crowd is irristible.

False priests, false prophets, false doctors, false patriots, false prodigies of every kind, veiling their proceedings in mystery, have always addressed themselves at an immense advantage to the popular credulity, and have been, perhaps, more indebted to that resource in gaining and keeping for a time the upper hand of truth and common sense, than to any half dozen items in the whole catalogue of imposture.

Curiosity is, and has been from the creation of the world, a master passion. To awaken it, to gratify it by slight degrees, and yet leave something always in suspense, is to establish the surest hold that can be had, in wrong, on the unthinking portion of mankind.

The town of Sumpter had long been the headquarters for a gang of blockaders and bootleggers and although it was patent to almost everybody that such was the case, they were unable to get any evidence that would convict anyone. A great many were suspected as they had no visible means of support but still they apparently were always well-heeled with the coin of the realm.

It became so nauseating to the general public that they were discussing ways to stop the nefarious business.

All of a sudden there were a score or more arrests made. Whisky had been purchased of them by a dapper little stranger, who had been stopping at one of the leading hotels of the town for several months. He was ostensibly engaged in prospecting for oil and he had been hiring the different taxi-drivers who had been suspected of handling whisky, to drive him about the country to get options on different tracks of land. Incidentally as he became better acquainted with the taxi drivers,

he inquired of them if it were possible to get some whisky as he was about dead for a dram. As he had been very liberal with them and "a hale fellow well met," they had no hesitancy in getting it for him.

At first, they would have him meet them at certain places and they would give it to him, but as time wore on they became better acquainted, they did not hesitate to take him to the stills, themselves. He always sampled the stuff and made a note of whom he bought, how much he paid and gave a description of the place where he bought it. This memo was placed upon each container after he got in at the hotel and placed upon the container. After doing this he placed it in the safe of one of the prominent citizens, where it was not disturbed until the day of the trial. When he got them well rounded up, he went before the proper official and swore out the warrants and they were speedily arrested.

It turned out that he had been employed by the K. K. K's. Every one was convicted and given road sentences with a good stiff fine.

A great many "Goody Goods" shook hands with themselves and congratulated themselves upon the good work they had done in cleaning up the town of its bootleggers, when as a matter of fact, they never donated a cent in money or a moment's time. Possibly, had they known what was being done, they would have given the whole scheme away.

However, it gradually leaked out that the K. K. K.'s were the men behind the gun. This knowledge created quite a commotion both among the bootleggers and the machine politicians. The former made all kinds of threats, on the quiet, as they had a good wholesome fear of the Klan. The later were afraid that the Klan might have something to say politically to their detriment, therefore, something had to be done to put the "Kibosh" on the Klan.

There happened to be a Klansman on the grand jury and he was the object of their attack. So affidavits were prepared against several on the grand jury, but the others were blinds, in order to catch the Klansman.

Because he made answer in a certain way to a question,

they had him indicted by the grand jury for perjury. The case was continued from court to court and at last accounts, it still was there. The whole affair was not a prosecution but a persecution.

The great object was to stop the growth of the Klan. which the machine was afraid of. The Klan was onto them and they simply ceased to function. But for all of that, it was given out that the bootleggers had a list of all the Klan members.

Some of the members became weak-kneed and dropped out by non-payment of dues, but the real substantial ones were as much on the job as though they met regularly.

It was amusing, however, to see the actions of some of the would-be law and order people. They appeared to want the bootleggers to win their case against the Klansman.

It was brought out in the trials of the bootleggers that one of the largest stills ever unearthed in the county was discovered on a prominent planter's plantation. The still was located in an underground room, the only mode of access being through a well. This well was located near a tenant's home. Twenty feet from the top of the well a tunnel was found leading from the well. The officers followed this and came to a room in which was stored 150 gallons of corn whisky, already for shipment, a large quantity of corn mash and a complete still.

From the underground room a hollow sycamore tree furnished means for ventilating the distillery.

From this still most of the whisky, that found sale in the town, was furnished.

The detective never was able definitely to find the man, who was the wholesale distributor, but he suspected Sol Haines, but he was unable to fasten the guilt upon him.

After the Goody Goods had shown their hand as against the Klan, the latter laid down completely and it was only a short time until the bootleggers were doing a larger business at the same old stand.

The Klan members, although not active, stood as a stone

wall against all pressure that was being brought against any individual member.

Some of the members, who were public officials, ostensibly withdrew from the order but at heart, they were Klansmen and would not stand for any funny business.

As we have mentioned the whisky men became more bold and thought they could pull off most any kind of a stunt. Sol Haines among them.

He learned that Frank Butler was to be a guest at the Christmas house party during the holidays, and he decided upon drastic measures to take his revenge upon him. He compelled his two lackeys—the doctor and lawyer, who were drug fiends and depended upon him for their dope, to aid him in carrying out his nefarious plot, and he perfected all his arrangements so as to be ready when Frank came.

The degenerate lawyer became alarmed as the time drew near for Frank's appearance and he had a remorse of conscience, so he went to the chief of police, who was a Klansman, and unfolded the whole plot.

The chief told him to carry out his part of the plot, but tell no one what he had done. You do this and you will not be prosecuted, but if you fail me, I will send you to the pen as I have a witness to what you have communicated to me. As he said this, he said, "Jim" and from behind a screen his private secretary came out with a paper with everything the lawyer had said, down in shorthand.

"Now when he gets ready to spring his scheme, let me know at once."

"I surely will," said the lawyer.

Saying this he left the room.

CHAPTER VI.

In the Eastern story, the heavy slab that was to fall on the bed of state in the flush of conquest was slowly wrought out of the quarry, the tunnel for the rope to hold it in place was slowly carried through the leagues of rock, the slab was slowly raised and fitted into the roof, the rope was rove to it and slowly taken through the miles of hollow to the great iron ring. All being ready with much labor, and the hour come, the sultan aroused in the dead of night, and the sharpened ax that was to sever the rope from the great iron ring was put into his hand, and he struck with it, and the rope parted and rushed away, and the ceiling fell. So, in the case of Sol Haines. All the work, near and far, that tended to the end, had been accomplished; and in aan instant the blow was struck, and the roof of his stronghold dropped upon him.

Sol had conceived a very brilliant idea, as he supposed, and he was going to take advantage of the situation. He imagined that about all the better class of people were opposed to the Ku Klux Klan. His scheme was to impersonate them and commit a crime and have it laid at their door. This was the plot the drug addict of a lawyer unfolded to the chief of police.

Sol proposed to dress in white robes with white helmets similar to those worn by Klansmen. His first step was to compel the two drug fiends, whim he was supplying with narcotics to assist him in his inhuman scheme.

He had rented a cottage about a mile from town, where he had made all the necessary preparations to carry out his diabolic deed. A criminal operation was to be performed upon Frank Butler. He was to be kidnapped and carried out here where the deed was to be performed and it was to be done by the addict of a doctor.

To see with what cunning he had planned the whole affair, it is only necessary to state that he had bolted down four staples in the floor, with chains attached and handcuffs at the end of each chain. The victim was to have his hands handcuffed and his feet manacled and the fiend of a doctor was to do the rest.

On the night of the kidnapping, the doctor was stationed at the cottage with all his surgical instruments.

Even, in case the victim died in the operation a coffin had been obtained to house the body.

Sol Haines, assisted by the lawyer addict and two thugs arrayed themselves in white robes, resembling those of the Klan and started on their way to the home of Mr. Sanford.

It was a dark and dreary night; people nestling in their beds or circling late about the fire. Want colder than charity, shivering at the street corners; church towers humming with the faint vibration of their own tongues, but newly resting from the ghostly preachment 'One.' The earth covered with a sable pall as for the burial of yesterday; the clumps of dark trees, its giant plumes of funeral feathers, waving sadly to and fro; all hushed, all noiseless, and in deep repose, save the swift clouds that skim across the moon, and the cautious wind, as, creeping after them upon the ground, it stops to listen, and goes rustling on, and stops again, and follows, like a savage on the trail.

Whither go the winds and clouds so eagerly? If, like guilty spirits, they repair to some dread conference with powers like themselves, in what wild regions do the elements hold council, or where unbend in terrible disport? It was such a night as this that Sol and his accomplices slipped out of the car and sneaked along in the shadow of the trees up to the large veranda.

All hooded, they noiselessly sneaked along upon the porch until they came to the door, when Sol knocked.

"What's wanted," a voice within asked.

"A telegram for Frank Butler," replied a voice on the outside.

"He's retired," came the reply from within.

"It's a very important telegram and it requires an answer," from the outside, was replied.

"Alright, I will let you in," replied the voice from within, which was that of Mr. Sanford.

He unlocked the door and in came a hooded figure. He had hardly gotten inside the door until there was heard a scramble and three other hooded figures were pushed inside by six stalwart policemen.

Mr. Sanford was not only a very handsome old gentleman —upright and stalwart, with a massive gray head, a fine composure of face when silent, a figure that might have become corpulent, but for his being so continually in earnest that he gave it no rest, and a chin that might have subdued into a double chin but for the vehement emphasis in which it was constantly required to assist; but he was such a true gentleman in his manner, so chivalrously polite his face was lighted by a smile of so much sweetness and tenderness, and it seemed so plain that he had nothing to hide, but showed himself exactly as he was—incapable of anything on a limited scale, and firing away with those blank great guns, because he carried no small arms, whatever—that a person could not have helped looking at him with equal pleasure as he stood out in the center of the room as these ten figures protruded themselves upon his presence.

"Well, gentlemen, this is an unexpected meeting and a complete surprise to me. This is the first time in my life I have ever been favored with a visit from the Ku Klux Klan. I believe, that you said you had a telegram for Frank Butler, but it is a mystery why it takes four Klansmen and six stalwart policemen to deliver the message.

As he made these remarks, he stepped to a door and called Frank Butler.

Almost instantly, a figure in full K. K. K. uniform came into the room. As he came in, he uttered the following:

"Paraaturiunt montes, ridiculus mus nascetur."

"I see you gentlemen in robes have not the latest password of your order. You must be in arrears of dues. Officers

please remove their side arms, as it will not be necessary for them to have them as we converse."

As the officers reached for the hooded men's arms, they made some show of resistance. The two thugs were knocked down and Sol Haines was handled quite roughly, but the little lawyer was not touched as he handed out his gun.

Four big 44 calibre revolvers were found upon them.

"Remove their helmets, officers and let's see who the rascals are, that are parading in false colors and are about to attempt a crime in the name of the K. K. K.

Just imagine the position these miscreants were in, when they stood revealed. Sol Haines cringed and tried to put up a bluff that they were trying to play a practical joke on Frank Butler. When he found that he could not work that dodge, he commenced to plead for mercy.

Frank Butler removed his helmet and remarked to them, that the reason a great many people had an atipathy for the K. K. K., was on account of just such dirty dogs as they were, masquerading as Kluckers and committing crime.

The two thugs were given in charge of a couple of policemen, after their robes and helmets were removed these two policemen put them on.

Sol and the lawyer were told to put on their helmets. Then Sol's hands and feet were tied and he was carried out to a car, where they all took passage, Frank Butler and Mr. Sanford among the number. Frank kept on his regalia.

"We will now proceed out to the cottage and see how matters are out there," said the chief.

Five robed figures, four police and Mr. Sanford made up the party that repaired to the cottage. As they drew near the cottage, the four police were stationed about the house, one at the front door, one at the rear door and one each at the windows on either side.

The four hooded figures carried Sol to the front door and rapped. "Who's there," asked a voice within.

The chief punched Sol and had him to answer it was Sol.

"Alright," came from within. And a bolt was slid aside and they entered.

Sol, hooded, was thrown down on the mattress and the doctor was ordered to proceed. He handcuffed his hands to each of the staples in the floor and each of his feet were manacled to the staples in the floor. He had all his surgical instruments laid out on the table.

"Pull off his helmet, so he can see what is about to take place," said one of the hooded figures.

As he did so, the doctor was thunderstruck as he perceived that it was Sol, who was the victim.

"Remove your helmets and take off your robes, men and let this human vulture see who you are," said the leader of the hooded figures.

After he saw who they were he commenced to plead for mercy, but the chief answered all these pitiful pleas by telling him he cuold tell his tale of woe to the judge and at the same time placing handcuffs upon him. He and Sol were handcuffed to each other, but the laweyr was allowed to go unfettered. They were all taken to the city bastile to await trial, without bail. By good luck criminal court was in session and the grand jury brought in a true bill for attempted murder as well as a criminal operation.

CHAPTER VII

The arrest of Sol Haines and his four tools and the story of their attempted crime was a nine days wonder in the sleepy old town. It was on the tongues of almost every resident and the name of Frank Butler was uttered frequently with respect. The Klan was also spoken of in more respectful terms than before this occurrence, and by those who formerly denounced it in scathing terms. Some of whom said. "Perhaps we have been the least bit hasty in condemning something we positively knew nothing about but listened to Dame Rumor for our information."

Mr. Sanford, who had previously been a very pronounced opponent to the Klan, came out openly in their favor, remarking, "That if the Klan stood for what it did, he had no hesitancy in being willing to espouse its cause."

The local Klan had been waiting for the psychological moment to carry out its ideas, and it perceived that the present time was the auspicious period to make its master stroke. Bills were scattered all over the town announcing that a monster K. K. K. parade in full regalia would be staged on a certain night at 9 P. M. Also a public initiation of aliens would take place at a certain field after the parade through the Main street of the town. Every one was given a special invitation to witness the whole proceedings.

All who wanted to join the Klan would be accommodated by calling at a certain office on the afternoon of the parade.

All those who were accepted would be notified and those were rejected their names would not be revealed.

The town was all agog with excitement and many signified their willingness to become members, while others kept quiet and secretly made application.

On the night of the parade, the Klan came out with 500 robed figures, marching with military precision. Numerous

fiery crosses were carried and made the scene more impressive while a great many illuminated banners were shown. The slogans on these banners caught the public and as they passed along the whole populace cheered.

We will give the slogans of some of the banners:

"America for Americans."

"Separation of Church and State."

"Shut off Foreign Immigration."

"Free Schools for Our Children."

"Down With Lawlessness."

"Protection for Our Mothers, Our Sisters and Our Daughters," and numerous other as pungent ones.

When the procession arrived at the lot where the initiation was to take place a quadrangle was formed with the initiates within about 275 strong.

Among this number were some of the most prominent citizens of the town, Mr. Sanford being among them. Frank Butler was the master of ceremonies as he was a former Grand Dragon. It was one of the greatest events ever pulled off in the town and everything passed off without a hitch.

The next day, nothing could be heard except the talk about the parade. The day following the trial of Sol Haines and his four hirelings took place.

A great amount of time was consumed in securing a jury as the defendant's lawyers asked each proposed juryman if he was a Klucker, a Knight of the Ku Klux Klan or a member of the Invisible Empire. If he answered in the affirmative, he was rejected.

After this talk by the judge the jury was soon selected. We will not weary our readers with the minutiae of the trial but will merely mention that all the salient features of the case were brought out, notwithstanding the serious objections of the defendants' lawyers.

The judge finally interferred, saying that if they were members of the order, it necessarily did not disqualify them, unless they were so biased as not to be able to bring in a verdict according to law and the evidence. "You will so be governed in your rejections. You might just as well reject a man

for being a Mason or an Odd Fellow or a member of any other secret order."

The court room was paved with human faces. From the railing of the court officials and lawyers away into the sharpest angle of the smallest corner, all the looks were fixed upon the prisoners. Before them and behind; on the right and on the left; they seemed to stand surrounded by a firmament, all bright with gleaming eyes.

They sat there, in all this glare of living light, with their hands clutching their chairs and their heads thrust forward to enable them to catch with greater distinctness every word that fell from the judge, who was delivering the charge to the jury. At times, Sol turned his eyes sharply upon them to observe the effect of the slightest featherweight in his favor; and when the points against him were stated with terrible distinctness, looked towards his counsel, in mute appeal, that he would, even then, urge something in his behalf. Beyond these manifestations of anxiety, he stirred not hand or foot. He had scarcely moved since the trial began; and now that the judge ceased to speak, he still remained in the same strained attitude of close attention, with his gaze bent on him as though he listened still.

As the jury passed out, he looked wistfully, into their faces, one by one, as though to see which way the greater number leaned; but that was fruitless. The jailer touched him on the shoulder. He followed him back to the jail with the other three prisoners to await the verdict of the jury.

The jury was out only about one-half hour, when they filed back into the court room. Sol and the other prisoners were brought in. As they were all seated the judge asked the foreman of the jury, if they had reached a verdict. Being informed they had, he asked, "what you say?" "Guilty as charged."

The building rang with a tremendous shout, and another and another, and then it echoed deep loud groans, that gathered strength as they welled out, like thunder. It was a peal of joy from the populace outside, greeting the news that the fiends had been convicted.

The noise subsided and the judge proceeded to make a short talk to the prisoners before he passed sentence. He told them they had been convicted of one of the most brutal criminal attempts and only the intervention of the officers prevented their carrying out their nefarious attempt and that they were worse than any craven things he knew of and that they each deserved more punishment than the law prescribed. But he hoped that no Governor would with mistaken mercy ever grant a parole or pardon to any one of them. He sentenced each to the full limit. Sol Haines got thirty years, the doctor twenty-five years; the two thugs twenty years apiece, and the lawyer was let off with a suspended sentence for good behavior for five years, he to abstain from the use of narcotics or whisky for that time. If he failed to comply with the court's order he was to be committed to the penitentiary for five years. This sentence was given for his turning state's evidence.

The address was solemn and impressive, the sentences fearful to hear. But Sol stood like a marble figure, without the motion of a nerve. His haggard face was still thrust forward, his under jaw hanging down, and his eyes staring out before him, when the jailer put his hand upon his arm and led him back to jail with the others.

Thus ended one of the most sensational trials ever held in Sumpter. It also ended the frequent misdemeanors carried on by parties who were hooded and did business on the credit of the K. K. K.

The convicted prisoners were taken to the penitentiary, where they were put to work and thus prevented from committing farther depredations.

CHAPTER VIII.

The story teller presents dangers that are not met with in the poet; he pries, pillages, and makes capital of all he sees. With him there is no tranquility, no certainty that he will not some day lay you bare in the pages of a book. His eye is like a pump that sucks up everything like the hand of a thief that is always at work. Nothing escapes him; he gathers and picks up ceaselessly, he notices the movements, the gestures, the intentions, the slightest incidents and events; he picks up the smallest words, the smallest actions, the smallest thing. He makes stock from morning till night of these observations, out of which he will make a good telling story, a story, sometimes, that will make the round of the world, which will be read, discussed, commented upon by thousands and thousands of people. And the most terrible part of all is that the wretch can not help drawing striking portraits, in spite of himself, unconsciously, because he sees things as they are, and he must relate what he sees and hears. Notwithstanding the cunning he uses in disguising his personages, it will be said, "Did you recognize Mr. B—. and Mrs. C—? They are striking resemblances."

The occurrences that had taken place, here, in Sumpter and the trial had a very depressing effect upon Frank Butler. Since the night of the attempted kidnapping, he had changed his stopping place from the Sanford mansion to the hotel, but he did not do so without the serious protests of his host and hostess including Belle. But nothing they could say could induce him to stay, but he explained to them, that it was not on account of fear, or anything they had done, that urged him to make the change, and he farther remarked that he would have left the town immediately had he not been held as a ma-

terial witness. In fact, all the time he remained in town he kept himself removed and aloof from every one, except when he had to attend court.

His actions were very mystifying to the Sanfords and especially so to Belle. She could not imagine what she had done or any of her family had done or left undone to cause him to act as he was doing.

It worried her so much that she took her parents into her confidence and discussed the matter thoroughly. At last she prevailed upon her father to go and see Frank and see if he could find out what the matter was.

So, acting upon this, the father called at the hotel and inquired for Frank. He was informed that he was up in his room, so he sent up his card, Frank sent back word, inviting him to come up.

As Mr. Sanford knocked at Frank's door, the latter opened it and invited him in. Mr. Sanford held out his hand and Frank clasped it and the former gave it a hearty squeeze, giving Frank to understand that he was in the presence of a real friend. Frank invited him to be seated. As Mr. Sanford seated himself, he said, "My boy, what is the matter with you? Why have you refused our hospitality? And why have you sequestered yourself up in your room? Have we done anything to offend you, that you act as you have?"

"No," answered Frank with tears in his eyes. "Nothing of the kind, I hardly know how to answer your questions. But I will make a clean breast of my feelings which are the cause of my seemingly strange actions. I am ashamed to be in society."

"Why, my boy?"

"Simply, that every one knows what those miscreants contemplated doing to me, and I have not the nerve to meet people."

"Is that the only reason?" asked Mr. Sanford.

"Yes," answered Frank. Arising from his chair, Mr. Sanford stepped up to him and placing his hand upon his shoulder, said, "My boy, I am surprised and at the same time rejoiced to find such a clean minded young man, but I think you are over

modest and are doing yourself an injustice, as well as causing your friends untold anxiety as well as misery. I insist that you come back to my house and stay the remainder of the time you are in the city."

"No, I am going to leave tonight for Hopewell," answered Frank.

"You surely are not going to go without bidding Mrs. Sanford, who has taken a great fancy to you, not only on account of your own personality, but because she thinks there is a great resemblance between you and our son, whom we lost, when he was only ten years old, and also Belle. Good bye, are you?" exclaimed Mr. Sanford.

"Yes, I must," answered Frank, hesitatingly.

"Now, look here, my boy, I can't let you do this, as my wife and daughter hold you in the highest esteem and they will take it as though you do not care to see them, and I know a great deal different. Eh, my boy, you know that Belle, especially will be glad to see you, leaving Mrs. Sanford wholly out of the question."

After considerable more argument Frank consented to go up to the Sanford mansion that evening.

Mr. Sanford said they would expect him up for 6 o'clock dinner and that there would be no one else present except Mrs. Sanford, himself and Belle as the rest of the guests had gone out of the city to a bridge party and that it would be wholly informal affair, just a family dinner.

After this Mr. Sanford took his departure. Soon afterwards, Frank received a telephone message from the Sanford home, stating that their car would be at the hotel at 5:30 to convey him up there.

Promptly at 5:30 Frank's telephone rang in his room at the hotel, going to the phone, he was informed by the clerk that Mr. Sanford's car was awaiting him at the hotel driveway entrance. He at once proceeded down stairs, having made ready to go, previously, according to agreement with Mr. Sanford, passing through the lobby of the hotel to the drive way, where the car was parked, awaiting his coming. He perceived Belle at the wheel, the door of the car standing ajar to admit him. Belle motioned him to take the seat by

her and as he seated himself in the car, the car speeded down the avenue.

A few common place remarks were made, about the weather, etc. Belle said "she hoped she had not kept him waiting, he replied that time was no object to him.

It was only a few minutes until the car entered the drive way of the Sanford's, where the car stopped, as it reached the home.

Frank assisted Belle out of the car and they went within.

As they entered the reception room, Mrs. Sanford met them and extending her hand to Frank, clasped his in a very tight squeeze and a smile illumined her face. She gently drew him to her and throwing her arms around his neck and planted a kiss upon his forehead.

As she did this, she exclaimed, "My boy, you have come back to a home that welcomes you, and which has been exceedingly lonely while you have been away. Pardon me for treating you so cordially and sentimentally. For I look upon you as something I have been deprived of for several years. A son," as she said this, she pressed him closer in a tight embrace and tears streamed down her cheeks. You may think my actions strange, but I can't control my feelings. From the very first time I saw you, I thought my beloved son, who died several years ago, had returned to life, and the more I saw you and thought of you, when you were away, the more you appealed to me. No one but a mother can appreciate my feelings. Therefore, you will please excuse my seeming familiarity, my outburst of pent-up feelings."

Frank was touched beyond measure by the feelings of affection displayed by Mrs. Sanford, and his mind was carried back to the very pleasat home in the West, where he knew a gray-haired lady, undoubtedly was thinking of him. And whenever he came home, she acted in the same way that Mrs. Sanford had, who was always unwilling for him to leave home. While he was thus ruminating, she again kissed him and he could not help reciprocating and he heartily kissed the sweet up-turned face.

At this juncture, Mr. Sanford appeared upon the scene, having observed how she was wrapped up in her greetings of

Frank, going up to her , said, "Mother, had you not better give Frank a chance to go to his room and get ready for dinner?"

"Yes, daddy, but I was almost in Heaven, when the dear boy gave me the sonly kiss."

Mr. Sanford told Frank to take his old room and that dinner would be served as soon as he was ready. I will await your return."

As Frank passed out into the hall, Belle met him. She looked as though she was hurt.

"Say, Frank, why do you not greet me as you did mother. Why be so stingy with your caresses and kisses?"

Frank was astonished, but going quickly to her side, he gently placed his arms about her and drew her to him and kissed her upturned, inviting lips.

Oh, the exquisite bliss, the purity, the chasity of a young virgin's love. Calling forth all the music of her soul, teaching her that profound and ineffable idolatry in which the youthful heart only can be a worshipper, leading her to live amidst bright realities and far brighter dreams, conjuring up those exquisite imaginings that tinge with such roseate hues the pathway of the future, realizinz the most refined image of the heavenly passion, seeming boundless, illimitable, infinite as a rich incense that fills the earth to the very vaults of Heaven with its exquisite perfume, bathing all the senses in a fount of bliss, till existence itself seems to melt away into oblivion—such is the young maiden's true love.

Yes, and it appears as if the spirit of a celestial melody poured its effluence into her soul, attuning all her feelings, all her thoughts, all her emotions, to this passion so new to her. And within the final realms of the heart, as the mental vision looks deeply inward, the image of the loved one is found impressed; and the mind experiences bliss in the thought that it cherishes a deathless sentiment.

Oh, how the fancy disports and gambols, on unwearied wing in the paradise of its own creation. 'Tis the golden-hued honey which Providence has placed upon the brims of life's bitter cup, and the heart feels as if it must perish were the spell that enthralls it to be no more.

This was the first time that Frank had ever held Belle in his arms, much less ever kissed her.

How long they would have lingered in this sweet communion, we can not tell, but they hastily came to themselves, when mother's voice was heard, calling Belle.

CHAPTER IX.

Indeed it was a very happy family group that sat down at the six o'clock dinner table that evening. Mr. Sanford remarked, "Mother, I haven't seen you as light-hearted and in such a happy vein in years as you are tonight. It puts me in mind of our youthful days, when I was wont to call on you and you met me at the door with a beaming smile and a lovely kiss."

"O hush, you must not tell tales out of school as they become contagious," remarked Mrs. Sanford, and as she said this, she slyly looked at Belle, whose face assumed a pink color, instantly, and turning to Frank, she said, "Ain't it a fact?"

Frank was so flustered that he dropped his fork upon the floor, but Mrs. Sanford thoroughly enjoyed their embarrassment.

"Well, children I understand you both, perfectly well. In fact I can read your minds, I know how the matter stands; I know I have found a son and Belle has found her future husband. I never could be more happy than to have such things come true." More blushing on the part of Belle and more embarrassment for Frank.

"Mother, how can you be so presuming and plain?" spoke up Belle.

"Never mind what your mother says, she is too happy to know just what she is saying. When she is extremely happy, she says a lot of things that ordinarily she would leave unsaid," remarked Mr. Sanford.

"Pass Frank some of the chicken, I know you have so astonished him and given him such a sudden shock that he is not doing himself justice in supplying the wants of nature," remarked the father.

After all the meal was highly enjoyed by all. They all appeared to understand the situation explicitly.

After the meal, Frank and Belle repaired to the veranda, where they occupied an inviting upholstered swing. It would only hold two and they would have to sit quite closely at that.

And as Belle sat by the side of Frank, with one fair hand locked in his own, she gazed upon him with looks of tenderness, full of love, full of profound and impassioned affection; and the heightened color of her damask cheeks and the deepening scarlet of her plump and juicy mouth, combined with the gentle heaving of her bosom indicated the soft desires that were animating her soul. And as Frank felt the warm pressure of Belle's hand, when, too, he saw the tint of the rose deepening into that of the carnation upon her cheeks, and her fine bright eyes becoming more melting and tender in expression, he would have been something more or something less than a man had he not placed his arms about her and gently drawn her to him and simply smothered her with kisses.

With rapture, oh, with ineffable rapture, did he gaze upon this young, lovely, and confiding creature who had given her heart to him.

"Beloved Belle," he said in a soft, low tone, "you have asked me if I am happy now, and I can truthfully reply that my felicity is complete. Only a short while ago since you permitted me to declare I loved you; and at that time you confessed to a kindred feeling."

"Yes, Frank, murmured Belle, burying her blushing countenance upon her lover's breast," as she spoke, "since I threw myself into your arms and declared that I loved you as I did no other mortal, dearer than parents, and dearer than anything that wealth can bestow."

"And you have not repented of this promise, my Belle?" said Frank as he pressed her still more closely to him.

"No, oh, no, I never shall repent," she murmured, her whole form vibrating to his fond pressure; and throwing her head back in a soft, sensuous languor, she regarded the ceiling as if in deep communing with herself.

And as that charming head was supported by the back of

the swing, the attitude which her person thus took was one of such complete abandonment that Frank had never known her to yield to before, an abandonment which profiled all the undulating lines of her full but symmetrical form. There was something irrestibly inviting, something overpoweringly ravishing in this attitude, and as Frank's eyes swept over the beauteous features which were thus outlined and the flowing developments of her person which were thus thrown forth, he felt that he could die on behalf of one in whom so many graces and such marvellous attractions were concentrated.

"Yes," she resumed, her eyes closing and her bosom heaving with a profound sigh of pleasure, "I am thine, Frank, unalterably thine."

"Dearest, dearest Belle," exclaimed Frank, his whole form trembling with an unknown and ineffable joy, as he pressed her more closely to his heart and felt her glowing bosom palpitate beneath his arm, "What would you have me understand?"

"That I am thine, to be your wife, my beloved, until death do us part," she answered, in a tone of exultation and impassioned fervor, and throwing herself completely in his arms, she whispered in his ears, kiss me, kiss me roughly and do it often, for I love you fondly, wildly, and madly." And as she thus spoke, she raised her head, from his shoulder where it had reposed; and, gazing upon him with her blushing, burning countenance, she looked into the depth of his eyes with an ardor that transfused its flames into his own soul.

"Dearest Belle," he murmured, what a glorious view of Heaven has this love of thine opened to my comprehension."

And then they gazed upon each other for a long time in silence; but love, even when it is mute, speaks with a thousand eloquent tongues, and the soul has an ear which catches all the delicious outpourings of those secret and mysterious voices. Oh, these are moments of ineffable bliss and surpassing ecstacy, when the very life appears to be melting in mingled joy and voluptious langor and when the impassioned looks that thus meet and thus convey vows more fervid than language could frame, unite in bliss and lose themselves for a long time in each other.

Yes, love has its intoxicating pleasures and its delirium of happiness; and Belle now experienced all the glowing rapture and the Elysian joyousness which fill the youthful heart when it feels another beating against it. And, carried away by the ardent longings which were devouring her, she pressed her lips to those of Frank; while he felt her entire form vibrating in his arms and her bosom palpitating like the long swell of the ocean after the whilrwind has swept over it. All their thoughts and all their senses were absorbed in the enjoyment of the blissful present.

This was their betrothal, reader.

It was quite late ere they noticed the time. In fact, time was no object to them. They had forgotten there was such a thing as time, so engrossed were they. They were aroused from their happiness by the crowing of the roosters and Frank looked at his watch and he saw it was past midnight.

"Well, my dear, we had better go in as it is time for you to retire, if you have the nice bloom on your cheeks in the morning," said Frank.

"I hate to leave you my dear," said Belle.

"Well, I hate to have you, but we must get some sleep," replied Frank.

"I will see your father in the morning and tell him what we have done and ask him for your hand," remarked Frank.

"We must go in, now my dear," said Frank.

"Just kiss and hug me again Frank, so I can sleep well."

With a long lingering kiss and a tender embrace, they parted at the bottom of the stairway.

CHAPTER X.

Years ago they were wont to say that the apportionment of six hours' sleep to a man, seven hours' sleep to a woman and eight hours' sleep to a fool was about right.

There can be no set rules for regulating sleep. The amount of sleep you require depends upon the kind of work you have to do.

There is one thing sure, however, if you fail to sleep enough you will fail to work enough.

It is self evident that Frank and Belle had the requisite amount for they arose in the morning, looking bright and cheerful and perfectly happy. And as they met at the breakfast table there appeared to be an atmosphere of jolity among the whole quartette—Frank, Belle, and the father and mother.

"I hope you had a pleasant night's sleep," remarked Mrs. Sanford with a smile, addressing her remark to Frank.

"Yes, thank you, I had a very pleasant night's rest," answered Frank.

"Well," remarked Mr. Sanford, "If there is a hell on earth it's located in a sleepless chamber. If there is a bottomless pit of punishment this side of the river Styx, it's insomnia. If you want to see the fallen angels, watch the ghostlike figures as they dance before your tortured mind at midnight. Mephistopheles, Moloch, Shedim and Titan had nothing on the ghoul that invented insomnia. Of all the dim, dark, unknown alleys; of all the haunted, hated halls on earth, it's the bedroom filled with the bugs of wakefulness."

"Say father, you must have been riding a nightmare, sometime in your young life or else you could not give such a vivid picture of insomnia," said Belle.

Pleasantly the breakfast hour was passed and as they arose from the table, Frank followed Mr. Sanford out into the reception room and indicated to him that he would like a few words with him.

"What is it, my boy?" said Mr. Sanford.

"Well, to get down to brass tacks, without any flowery preliminaries, I want to marry Belle and I wish to get your consent," Mr. Sandford.

"All matters pertaining to the woman's department or household affairs and heart matters, where they are not physical, I leave them to my wife and daughter," remarked Mr. Sanford.

"I do not mix up in any of those things. Belle is old enough to make her own choice as to a husband and you will have to make all your arrangements with her," said Sanford.

"But I will say this. I admire a young man, who is not afraid to work and carve out his own fortune. I have become nauseated with the young men in this immediate section. They live off of their fathers, their grand-fathers and their great grand-fathers. The ancestors, by feeding himself but once a way, and then with a piece of fat pork anchored to a cotton cord, half-soling his own pants with seaweed and going barefoot in summer to save his shoes, he was able to hang to his land until the industry and enterprise of others made it worth almost a dollar an acre, when he passed it on to his posterity simply because it was not portable. The unearned increment accumulated from generation to generation in a ratio of geometrical progression, until his spawn became as rich as grease and slung on more unadulterated agony than a Washington nigger with a brass watch. And I believe that you are a man that will make yourself worthy of the esteem of any community in which you may be thrown. Yes, my boy, I have no objections to you, but we will call Belle in here and see what she has to say upon the subject." Saying this, he went to the door and called Belle. As she came into the room, he said, "What do you think, my daughter, this young man has had the nerve to ask me for your hand in marriage? What do you think of that, my young lady?"

"I do not see anything out of the way in that," said Belle with a very demure air.

"I told him, he would have to arrange matters with you as I was no doctor and was not up on heart difficulties."

"I will see you both later, good morning," and away he went.

"Ain't he a darling?" remarked Belle.

"He certainly is," said Frank.

The forenoon was spent in cooing and wooing except when Mrs. Sanford came in and congratulated both upon their happy choice. "I told you, Frank, that I had found a son and I now know that I was not mistaken.

"Mother, I am going to get jealous of you. I believe you are in love with Frank," said Belle.

"I certainly am, but it is a different kind of love from yours and she gave Frank a sly wink.

Mrs. Sanford and Belle had grown up not so much as mother and daughter, but nearer like two sisters. In fact there was only sixteen years difference in their ages. For this reason, and mother had kept young apparently. She had made home and home duties her pleasure, and, having tried to do her whole duty, she had kept her heart young, and she found increased happiness and honor in every added year, rejoicing with joy unspeakable in the love and devotion of Belle, who had seen in her mother's age but the "sunset breaking into day." Mrs. Sanford's whole life had been wrapped up in Belle since the death of her son and now, she was dividing it with Frank, who was to be her son-in-law. What made her love stronger for him was the fancied resemblance of him to her departed son.

While they were translated to the Elysian fields of unalloyed love, a messenger boy came on the scene with a telegram from the company for Frank. It notified him to take the first train for Hopewell without fail.

What was he to do?"You will have to go Frank, but try and get back just as soon as possible," said Belle.

He telephoned to the station to see how soon he could get a train. He was informed that one went within a half hour. Hurriedly he packed his grip and bid Mrs. Sanford 'good-bye,' and Belle took him to the train in her car.

Write me as soon as you get to Hopewell and let me know

what the urgent business is, said Belle as she gave him a good bye kiss in the car.

He promised so to do and he had hardly time to get out of the car and get his train. He waved her an adieu from the rear of the car and she waved to him until the train went out of sight around the curve.

Frank had been experimenting in making a new gas to be used in the war and he had perfected the same. It was made from several ingredients and, they were shipped in separate parts until they were to be used. Frank was the inventor and no one knew how to manipulate the several parts in right quantities to make the gas. It had been tried out at the works and worked perfectly satisfactorily.

The DePont people had received a big order for the same to be shipped to France at once. And as Frank was the only one who knew how to mix it, he had to go across the seas to manage the business.

He was told to get ready and take the first train for New York and enship there as the ingrediates were already loaded on boat.

Frank suggested that it was very sudden and that undoubtedly he could get his assistant to go in his place as he could inform him how to mix the different materials. But the company would not have it that way and insisted that Frank should go.

Hastily writing to Belle, he informed her about the matter and told her he would telegraph as soon as he arrived in New York.

It will be remembered by our readers that during the late war the United States were filled with German spies and anarchists and a great number of trusted Americans were in the employ of these Germans.

Spies were located in all the big powder plants and every other concern, where they could gain any knowledge that might be of use to them.

The DuPont Powder Company was not an exception.

As soon as Frank started for New York the spies were informed of it there. They even knew that he was the inventor

of a new kind of gas and that an amount had been shipped and that he was going to France to develop the same.'

"I must see Detective Burns at once—where is he?—hurry up and tell me. The attendant in Detective Barnes' office was almost carried off his feet b ythe inrush of a wild-eyed girl, crazy with excitement.

Detective Barnes come in jumps towards him, and the girl flung herself into his arms.

"What's the matter, my dear young lady?" asked the detective.

He almost forced her into a chair and made her sit down. She was so excited that her teeth fairly chattered and she was all of a tremble. She appeared like a person who had the tremors. She clutched the air for something she could not reach, as if for support and finding none her hands dropped down on her lap. Her eyes were restless and her lips quivered. Evidently she stood in deathly fear of something. She was simply hysterical.

She was an attractive girl of about nineteen years of age, so young, so fair, of medium height and slender form. Her whole form was characterized by girlish symetry and womanly elegance, so blended as to constitute alike the grace and the glory of nineteen summers, but it was her face that would fascinate a person. And though of this nymphlike symetry, she was not thin, but of exquisite proportions, her figure being characterized by that gradual and easy transition between all the contours and by that beautiful softness of outline which realize the matchless graces of Grecian statues. She had delicately moulded features, intense unfathomable eyes of dark brown, and lips that showed her idealistic, high-strung temperament. Speaking gently to her, Barnes asked her, "what's the matter. Please collect your thoughts, steady up and pull yourself together."

She looked about the room as if they were sentinels or spies, but still, she wanted to tell something but could not pluck up enough courage to speak out.

"I am afraid of my life. Please, kind sir help me. I will be murdered, if I do not kill a party."

Barnes thought he had a crazy person to deal with. 'Murder, how can you commit murder?"

"Yes, you know the DuPont Powder Company. Well, they have a chemist in their employ whom they have started on a trip to France to instruct the armies in handling a new kind of gas that he has invented. The anarchistic spies kidnapped him and are going to make him give up the formula and then kill him. And it is to be done tonight and you have not a single minute to spare, if you want to save his life."

Barnes was astonished at her revelation. She handed him her card, it read, Miss Phoebe Perkins.

"I belong to a secret conclave, in fact I am an anarchist. I belong to an iron bound group of men and women. The object of this order, is to kill all prominent men, statesmen, financiers as well as military men.

"I was drawn to do the killing and if I don't I will be killed myself. I can't commit the deed, as the young man has never done me or any of us a wrong. I escaped from the headquarters and came here in hopes you might be able to head off the murder."

"You expect to lure the victim into your clutches and then make away with him, is that the plan?" "Yes."

Her eager, flushed face betrayed the enthusiasm which had once carried her into the gang as she called it.

"We are no longer making war against man, we are making war against gas and electricity."

"Why, have you come to me?" The question seemed to puzzle her. "At first, I was carried away with the project, but later, I have seen the inhumanity in it and I want to get away from the crowd, but I fear them, as they would not hesitate for an instant in killing me if they knew I had been here."

CHAPTER XI.

When Belle received no word from Frank for a couple of days she became very uneasy and consulted with her father as to the advisibility of telegraphing the Dupont people. Her father advised her to wait another day, but she could not stand the suspense, so she sent them a message, asking them if they had heard from Frank Butler since he arrived in New York.

A telegram was sent her from the firm stating that nothing had been heard of him. Belle at once got into communication with the chief of New York detectives and instructed to see if the Shamrock, the vessel Frank was to sail on, on had left and to see if Frank Butler had shipped on the same.

The DuPont people got busy and sent telegrams to New York also.

They immediately got an answer back that Frank Butler had been kidnapped by an anachist group and that they were on their trial.

The head of the company telegraphed Belle the facts as he had learned them and immediately repaired to New York and sought out the chief of police.

A thorough investigation showed that Detective Barnes had sent his men to the gang's headquarters but the birds had flown. He then went to the shipping dock and found out that the boat had left and that several men had boarded the boat with an alleged sick man, who was unconscious.

Putting all these circumstances together it was surmised that the gang were unable to get the formula from Frank, had drugged him and carried him onto the boat. At the same time using his passports and passed themselves off as his assistants.

Belle and her father went to New York by the first train after receiving the telegram from the company, stating he had been kidnapped.

DuPont chartered a special yacht and getting the detectives, he ran across Belle and her father in the detective's office. She insisted upon going along, but they pursuaded her that it were better that she did not. DuPont, however, agreeing to send her a wireless, if anything turned up.

In a few hours, the DuPont yacht gave chase. It being a fast going ship, they expected to overtake the Shamrock in a few hours.

Belle met Miss Phoebe Perkins at the detective's office and at once learning of her errand to the office became interested in her. The girl was all excitement and she feared for her life, if she staid in New York, so Belle invited her to go along home with her and to stay there temporarily until it might be safe for her to venture out in public.

When Frank Butler came to, he found himself confined in a small room with an attendant, as he supposed, but who proved to be a guard.

"Where am I? and what causes the room to rock so much like a boat?" asked Frank of the guard.

"You are on a boat," answered the guard.

How comes it that I am on a boat, and how did I get here?" asked Frank.

"You were insensible and was carried aboard the boat ten days ago," replied the guard.

"How was that?"

"You were scheduled to sail on this boat and had it not been for your friends taking charge of you, you would have failed to make the boat and it was for the government's interest that you surely sailed on this boat," answered the guard.

"What made me insensible and where did it occur?" asked Frank.

"You will know all as soon as you are able to be up," replied the guard.

Frank was not just satisfied with these explanations and he commenced to meditate, but his mind was simply a blank at that time.

As he lay upon his couch that night, his mind came back to him. He remembered that he was on his way to the steam-

ship company's office and that he was pounced upon by a mob and some drug was placed under his nose and that was as far as he could remember as he had been practically drugged ever since.

He commenced to meditate what it was done for and where he now was and what the outcome would be. Well, he thought to himself, I will have to watch and try and discover what is up.

At this he dosed off to sleep and did not awaken until called by his guard.

"It is time you were getting up. My orders are to take you down to the mess-room and get your breakfast," remarked the guard.

"How long have you been my master, and by whose orders am I supposed to obey?" asked Frank.

"Never mind, you may not be so important a personage when you find out where you are and under whose command you are," replied the guard.

The Germans had demonstrated to their entire satisfaction that they could get by the ally forces with their submarines as they had made two trips across with their submarine and had come off without any apparent difficulty.

They had also effected a sort of understanding with the Mexicans and were running troops into that country as well as arms. There was no question but they had a headquarters for all of this business upon some of the many islands in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Mexico or South America. This machination was all perfected so that in case America was drawn into the war in opposition to them they would have an ally on this side, who might be able to harass the United States and prevent them from sending troops across the ocean.

They had made their headquarters for coaling and dispensing guns and ammunition on an island near St. Thomas.

So after the United States had declared war upon Germany, the latter country had the Atlantic pretty well covered with raiders. Their spies honeycombed the United States, not only foreigners, but some renegade Americans were in their employ. North Carolina furnished some, one of whom

is prominent in trying to blacken the reputation of some of our best men in the country.

Their spies had discovered that the DuPont people had perfected a new gas and they were very anxious to get the formula. Their spies had been in the employ of the DuPont people and they knew that Frank Butler was the inventor of this new kind of gas and had been dispatched to go across the seas to demonstrate it. They were the parties who had abducted him at New York and carried him on board of the steamer in an unconscious condition.

After the ship had been out for a couple of days it was captured by one of the German raiders and it was convoyed to the island, we have mentioned. Frank had been kept in a drugged condition for several days, but shortly after the ship was captured he was brought out of his drugged condition.

Frank was taken before the conspirators and questioned in regard to the gas formula. They wanted it and they offered to give him his freedom, if he would show them how to mix the ingredients as they had captured the whole boat load but it was no good to them without the formula as they could not mix it.

Frank informed them he did not have the formula, as that had been sent across the seas in code, in order to prevent any occurrence of this kind.

"It seems to us that you being the inventor of it, would surely know how to mix the ingredients without a written formula. You surely must know how it is done."

But Frank told them it was impossible for him to remember hardly anything as he had been drugged as they well knew and that his mind was almost a blank.

Well, we will not insist at present, but remember you will have to divluge the secret sooner or later. We shall keep you a prisoner until such a time as you see fit to give it up and then we will set you free. Nothing farther was done by the conspirators until they arrived at the island, when Frank was taken off the boat and placed in a prison on the island.

CHAPTER XII.

A month had now elapsed since Frank was consigned to the prison on the island. It will be remembered that he was put in there simply for the purpose of his giving up the secret formula. It was a small room and indifferently appointed. A small bedstead in the recess of the room, a table, a couple of chairs, a washing stand and a few other necessaries, constituted the furniture. There were two windows, each well protected with iron bars, and looking down into a gloomy courtyard with high walls belonging to other portions of the building, so that escape in that quarter appeared to be impossible. The door was massive and studded with large nails; bolts had creaked and chains had rattled outside when it was closed upon him; and indeed every circumstance but too plainly indicated that this was in all respects a prison-chamber. Let us add that it was on the first story and was approached by a long dark corridor, in which Frank was occasionally allowed to walk, and our description is as complete as the purposes of the narrative require.

But now let us specially note the incidents of his first day's incarceration. At about one o'clock a domestic brought in a tray furnished with copious materials for a succulent repast, but it may be well understood that Frank was in no particular humor to partake of it. The man, without being precisely stern-looking was evidently of a cold and reserved disposition, a character well suited for such a place and such functions as those which he had to fulfil. Frank did not question him; for, he was tolerably well convinced that theis menial could know nothing of the secrets regarding his captivity, and if he did he would not betray them.

Before quitting the room, he said, in a tone that was coldly polite, "I am commanded, sir, to wait upon you with your meals three times a day, and on each occasion whatever orders you may wish to give shall be obeyed, consistently with the

rules of the place. Books and writing materials you can have—"

"Yes, bring me books and writing materials," exclaimed Frank, to whom it was at least some consolation to perceive that he was not to be treated with any extraordinary degree of severity.

The guard retired, and soon reappeared with his arms full of books and plenty of writing material. You can write as much as you please but everything you write will be examined.

Having thus spoken he left, carefully locking the door. In the evening he was allowed a light and he could keep it burning as late as he desired. This was his regular routine.

He became restless and he wondered what his friends would think had become of him. He could hardly restrain an outburst of bitter anguish as he thought of his much-loved and far off Belle. What could she think of a silence so unaccountable and an absence so prolonged? Must she not either believe him false. or else some terrible calamity had befallen him? In either case, he pictured to himself all the anguish which that charming creature was thus doomed to endure; and it went to his soul to reflect that so young, so lovely, and so affectionate a being should be plunged into such deep distress.

Our young hero's state of mind was not,therefore, very felicitious; and a month passed in deep uncertainties, varying excitements, and perplexing anxieties.

One night Frank had retired to rest earlier than usual, for his health had begun to fail him in the close captivity of that chamber, and, moreover, he had been giving way with a very painful intensity to the poignancy of his thoughts during the evening. The clocks in the towers about proclaimed the hour of nine, when he extinguished his light, he thus sought his bunk, exhausted alike in mind and body. A deep slumber fell upon him, and he was gradually borne into Elysian mazes of a delicious dream.

He fancied he was sleeping on a splendid sofa in a magnificently furnished apartment; he thought he saw himself thus reclining full dressed, as if it were in the daytime that he had lain down in this manner to rest for a short time. The

place seemed flooded with light, a sort of celestial lustre that rendered every nook and corner as clear and shadowless as the center of the room itself. Angels appeared to be passing through the ambrosial air, beauteous forms displaying a lithe and slender symmetry in the scant azure drapery that floated with a grace which no sculptural skill could ever illustrate in the massive marble.

All of a sudden he awoke and he believed it was an intimation sent from Heaven to cheer him up.

While in the fervor of his grateful piety he was silently breathing a prayer to his maker, he was suddenly startled by a singular noise which seemed to come from within the wainscoating of the recess that contained his bunk whereon he lay. He listened; the noise ceased. He concluded he had been mistaken, and he endeavored to go to sleep. But just as his eyelids were closing beneath the batlike wing of drowsiness, that strange sound was repeated.

He started up, held his breath, and listened more attentively than at first. The noise was like someone endeavoring to pierce through the masonry by means of an instrument that worked tediously in a stealthy manner, rather than with a boldness which cared not for discovery. The thought instantly struck Frank that some prisoner in the next apartment was trying to escape; and this idea thrilled with a sensation of joy to his heart, for the same means which could afford the hope of flight to a fellow captive would avail also for himself.

The noise contined, and Frank was on the point of knocking gently in order to lead the party, whoever it was, into conversation, but he checked himself and paused to reflect before he took any step whatsoever in the matter. Once more he lay down but still listening. As he listened he heard bricks and mortar falling in the hollow place in the wainscotting. After a couple of hours, he heard the party replacing the brick, possibly to conceal his work from the guard, the next morning.

Frank finally dropped off to sleep and when he awoke in the morning, he could hardly believe what took place the night before.

In the morning when the guard visited him and gave him

his breakfast, Frank asked him if there were other prisoners in the prison.

The guard told him he did not know. After breakfast the guard retired and an old woman came in to tidy up his room.

She had him go into the recess while she fixed up things in the room proper. After doing this she had him come back into the room. She stepped into the doorway and as she did so, she slipped him a note, which he clutched with eagerness the same as a drowning man would a straw. The following was the contents:

"Fellow Prisoner—If you value your liberty and are desirous to escape from this dreadful place, lend your assistance to one who is already working to the same end. Be not alarmed, therefore, at any unusual noise which you hear or at, any strange occurrence that may take place during the coming night, but be in readiness to fulfill any instructions you may receive. I am told you are a Yankee, and you will see by this that it is a fellow countrywoman who thus addresses you."

Frank was indeed, astonished to discover that his venturous neighbor was a female. He also discovered that she was an educated personage by her writing. Also that the old female servant was her accomplice in her project of escape. But it was a mystery to him how she expected to escape by getting from one prison room to another.

The day passed very slowly for Frank, waiting for the night operations to take place. He thought the evening would never come. He was as impatient as a little child waiting for Christmas. However as nearly everything must have an end the evening came. At nine o'clock Frank's supper was brought to him, but he hardly tasted it, so impatient was he to observe developments.

Candles were lighted but he was so nervous he could not get his mind into a proper mode to read. He got up from his chair and paced the room much agitated, then he sat down and reread the note for the tenth time.

It was beautifully written and how he wished that it had been written by Belle. He only hoped that the adventure would give him his freedom.

Just as the clocks struck eleven, Frank became suddenly aware of a suspicious scratching noise in the recess as upon the previous night.

"Is that woodwork?" suddenly asked a soft female voice from the other side. "Yes," answered Frank.

"If you want to escape, you will have to assist me in tearing off the wainscotting," said the same musical voice.

Frank told her he would give her all the assistance possible. He then went to work and he speedily loosened a panel of the wainscotting with a knife that was with his supper dishes. He found that a two foot opening had been made in the solid masonry as he pulled off the panel.

"Take all these tools—haste—quick," said the woman in the adjoining room; and as she spoke she pushed through a ladder of twisted silk and pieces of wood, several files, a bottle of fluid, some skeleton keys, a small crowbar and several other things. Frank, hastily took them and he was sure that an escape was surely contemplated. After taking in these things a soft mellow voice said, now help me through.

At the same time a pair of well-rounded, plump and snowy-white arms were thrust through the excavation; immediately came a head covered with a thick black veil, followed by a bust whose proportions were fraught with all the freshness of youth. In fine, our hero, taking hold of the female's arms, assisted her as well and as delicately as he was able to pass her entire form through the opening.

When this was done and the heroine of the adventure, being raised upon her feet, stood before Frank, the rapid glance he gave her expressed a certain amount of curiosity. She was of middle height, with a form of youthful appearance, perfectly symmetrical in shape and characterized by a lady-like appearance. But she had a veil on, but this did not prevent her from seeing alright, but it was not possible for Frank to see her face. She inspected Frank thoroughly for several minutes ,as could be perceived by Frank. Her veil was tied securely in order to prevent its coming off and exposing her face.

"You are doubtless astonished to see my face thus veiled?" she remarked in very suave and melting terms of her musical

voise, "but it is on account of a solemn vow I have made."

"A vow?" exclaimed Frank, in astonishment and almost with an accent of suspicion.

"Yes, it is a vow," she responded, drawing herself up in a dignified way.

"A vow hastily and rashly made, a vow pledged in the moment of despair, but still I am bound to pay implicit devotion."

"But why so singular a vow?" inquired Frank, thinking her either mad or a nadventuress.

"You thing I am mad," she said, evidently reading his mind.. "Perhaps it were better were I," speaking in a mournful tone and tears coming to her eyes as she attempted to staunch them with her veil.

"But I want to tell you that you are not engaging in this night's business with a lunatic nor a vamp, but it is the beauty that this veil conceals, that is the cause of all my trouble. I have passed through an ordeal that seldom, if ever any woman is called upon to go through. I have been pestered almost to death by a lot of titled Germans who tried to take advantage of my friendless situation."

"And because you would not accept their attentions, you have been imprisoned?" said Frank, now believing her tale of woe."

"You have guessed it exactly," she responded.

"I was abducted from my boat and brought a prisoner here some three weeks ago. I made a vow, then, in my excitement and despair and rage, that never again would I reveal my countenance to a being in the shape of a man. No, never, again," she exclaimed with a sort of frenzied petulance, until I encounter some one who shall have learned to love me, not for the beauty of my countenance, or the magnitude of my fortune, but for those gentle, endearing and more sterling qualities which as a woman, I possess. Now, then, let us get to work and try to escape."

"That is, after all, the principal point," said Frank.

"But tell me—"

"One word," she interrupted, with a sort of impatient way. "We must know how to address each other during the short

time we are together. What's your name?"

"Frank Butler."

"And mine is Mamie Simmons," she immediately rejoined in a manner of unaffected simplicity, which almost made Frank mad at himself for suspecting her.

"Perhaps you have heard of me before?"

"No, never," answered Frank. "But permit me to observe that since your enemies are so rancorous after you, it will be my duty to give you ample protection, as far as lays in my power," said Frank.

"Which I shall accept cheerfully and thankfully when I get back to the United States," replied Mamie. "And now let us apply ourselves earnestly and vigorously to work."

CHAPTER XIII.

Chroniclers are privileged to enter where they list, and to come and go through keyholes, to ride upon the wind, to overcome, in their soring up and down, all obstacles of distance, time and place. Thrice blessed be the last consideration since it enables us to follow Col. DuPont and his yacht in their pursuit of the vessel that left New York harbor with the materials for the manufacture of the new gas.

The yacht was provisioned and equipped for a long journey as was the custom of Col. DuPont as he never knew when he went out on a journey in it, how long it would take or when they would return.

He directed his captain to follow along the course the freight steamer was booked to go. They ran along for three days without meeting a single boat, but on the morning of the fourth day the man in the lookout sighted something and he gave the signal to slow down. Cautiously they steamed along until they came within seeing distance and by the aid of their glasses were able to make out that it was some wreckage with a man upon it.

They immediately put on steam and when near enough a boat was put out and manned by several seamen. They rowed out to the raft and found a man in almost an insensible condition, lashed to the wreck. They took him aboard and went back to the yacht, where he was taken on deck. Stimulates were given him and he revived enough to inform them, he had been on an American freighter, loaded with chemicals, giving the name of the ship as Shamrock, the ship that they were in seach of. He told them that they had been overhauled by a German raider, that was heavily armed and manned by a numerous crew. That both the ship and crew had been captured by the raider. He also said that four seamen of the Shamrock had managed to throw off some planks and had

jumped into the sea. The planks were gathered together and a raft was made. He was one of the four. Two were drowned in perfecting the raft and only two of them succeeded in reaching a temporary haven. His partner, the night previous had been washed overboard by a heavy sea, thus leaving him as the only survivor.

The raider put its own men in charge of the Shamrock and both of them steamed off in a southerly direction.

A message was sent by wireless from the yacht, asking for aid.

They steamed around in the neighborhood for several hours, when a ship hove in sight, which upon nearer approach was found to be an American warship, that had heard their message, calling for aid and had hastened to their assistance.

As the warship drew alongside of the yacht, Col. DuPont saluted the commander and explained matters. After consultation, it was decided to take a southerly course and see if anything of the raider could be discovered.

They skirted the whole eastern shore of the United States and down past Cuba, but nothing came of the hunt. So Col. DuPont, after refitting his yacht at an island, started back to New York.

Upon arriving in New York, he found several telegrams awaiting him from Mr. Sanford, asking him to communicate with him as soon as he returned.

Col. DuPont wired as soon as he received the telegrams the next day, Mr. Sanford and Belle left for New York. Upon their arrival they immediately went to DuPont's office to seek information. He told them what the reader already knows and in addition, he informed them that undoubtedly Frank was on the ship as the description given by the sailor tallied with that of the supposed sick man who was carried on deck, just before she sailed. If that were the case, undoubtedly Frank was a prisoner in the hands of the German spies.

After considerable discussion it was decided to go to Washington and lay the matter before the secretary of the navy. Acting upon this decision, Col. DuPont, Mr. Sanford and Belle took the first train for Washington.

An audience was easily arranged on account of the prominence of the Colonel in regard to the furnishing of ammunition and supplies to the army and navy. The matter was thoroughly gone over with the secretary. Belle suggested that undoubtedly that the Germans must have a rendezvous somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean, if not on the islands, then on the coast of Mexico or the South American coast. But she was inclined to think that it was on one of the small islands.

"Your suggestion is one that has occurred frequently to me," said the secretary.

"I will act upon that assumption."

Orders were immediately dispatched for four destroyers and a couple of warships to get ready for immediate departure. The commander of the fleet was called in and given orders to make a thorough search of all the islands and the sea coast, both along the coast of the United States, Mexico, and the South America coast.

He farther stated to Col. DuPont, Mr. Sanford and Belle that if any information was gleaned about Frank, that he would notify them at once.

Having accomplished their mission, Mr. Sanford and Belle left for home and Col. DuPont remained in Washington.

CHAPTER XIV.

"But have you already any settled plan which you are pursuing, Miss Simmons? inquired Frank.

"I have ascertained the whole plan of the range of buildings. I gained my information from the old female, who waits on you, but I had to bribe her in order to win her over. It was she who furnished the implements that I succeeded in making through the wall into your room. I found out if I escaped into the court yard from my window I would be detected and from your room escape were possible as there is no guard in the court facing your room."

"Then your propose to file away the iron bars at the window?"

"Yes, that is just it."

"What is this bottle of fluid?" asked Frank.

"That is nitric acid to make the bars soft," answered Mamie.

"The silken ladder is to descend from the window?" I suppose said Frank. "And the skeleton keys are to unlock the court doors?"

"It is now 11:30, have we sufficient time before us to do what is before us? While saying this he went to the casement with his light and examined the bars.

"It will take me two hours to cut two bars, and we will be able to get out of here before daylight."

"Yes, undoubtedly," answered Mamie, with all the nervous trepidation of a captive impatient of being set free.

This litle bit of conversation was suddenly stopped by a gruff voice, coming from the courtyard below, exclaiming, in German, "Shut that window and instantly put out the lights."

"Good Heavens," exclaimed Mamie, clasping her hands in

evident despair; "it is the watchman going his rounds and he has observed us."

"I guess the jig is up with us," said Frank.

"Not so, not so," ejaculated Mamie, as if suddenly imbued with new courage, "but we must abandon our work for to-night and in the morning I can find out from the old woman the exact hour the watchman makes his rounds and we can work accordingly, to-morrow night."

"Be it so," said Frank, well pleased that she had not given up hope of escape.

"Now then No. 20, are you going to put out your light?" exclaimed the same gruff voice.

Frank went to the window and said, "My good friend, this is the first time I have been ordered to put out my lights."

"Well, that was on account of our indulgence," answered the watchman.

"If you want to avoid being reported, you will do as I bid you without farther parley," remarked the watchman.

"Do as he asks you without any more words," remarked Mamie, in a trembling voice.

"Good night my friend, said Frank, and then he closed the window and put out the lights.

The room was now sudednly plunged in total darkness, and Frank was in a very embarrassing predicament. There he was alone—in the utter obscurity and in the depth of the night—in a bed-chamber with a young and no doubt beautiful woman, a situation in which most men would have envied him. But his own high principles of honor and integrity, his fidelity to Belle Sanford, amounting positively to a devotion and a worship, and likewise the generous and manly considerations which he experienced on behalf of a young, eccentric, but heroic being whom circumstances had thus so suddenly thrown in his way, all these combined at once to raise him, as it were, above the embarrassment of his position and render him superior to its awkardness, perplexity and bewilderment.

"Miss Simmons, I am more distressed on your account than mine," said Frank.

"Oh, that is nothing, Mr. Butler, provided success will

smile upon our undertaking to-morrow evening," she replied.

As she thus spoke, Frank perceived that she was coming towards him as he heard the rustle of her silk dress. In a few minutes he felt her hand laid gently upon his shoulder.

"You have great courage, my young lady," said Frank.

"Yes, at times, but when the excitement is over, I go all to pieces," and as she said this, she asked Frank to guide her to a chair as she felt as if she were going to faint, and as she said this she threw her naked, warm arms about his neck, as if to prevent herself from falling.

Frank hastily conducted her to a chair, into which she sank like one overcome with physical ailments.

"This veil suffocates me," she said with a sort of impatience.

"Thank Heaven a pitchy darkness prevails at this moment. so that I can take it off and breathe fresh air."

Frank knew by the sound that she was removing the veil.

"Now give me a glass of water, Mr. Sanford, she said after an interim of silence.

He felt his way to a shelf where the water and glasses were and returned to her and gave her the water.

"Place the glass to my lips," she said in a faint and dying tone, so that Frank became seriously alarmed, lest she would go into a dead faint.

He raised the tumbler to her lips and lifted her head gently.

"Enough, enough," she murmured in a voice scarcely audible; and her head drooped completely against Frank's breast, as he stood close by in a chair where she was seated.

"Heavens, what can I do for you, Miss Simmons, he inquired, being very much in a quandry what to do.

"Nothing, I shall be better presently, she said faintly. "It is a passing indisposition; let me repose for a few minutes upon your couch and then I shall be so far restored as to be able to creep back into my own room."

As she thus spoke, she clung to Frank in such a manner that he was compelled to raise her in his arms and sustain her —indeed, we might say carry her—toward the couch.

But Frank bestowed these attentions upon her with as much tender delicacy as a brother would exhibit towards a well-beloved sister; and it might have also been with that sisterly reliance on her part which present circumstances were so well calculated to inspire—it might have been, we say, in that same artless, ingenuous, and unsophisticated spirit that Mamie Simmons herself clung so tenaciously to our hero.

At all events, full certain was it that her round plump arms encircled his neck, her full and well developed bust was in the closest contact with his chest, her head lay drooping upon his shoulder, and her whole form was yielded up, as it were, in utter abandonment of exhaustion and faintness, as a sleeping child is borne in the arms of a father. He felt her warm cheek against his own, her fragrant breath fanning his face, her silky tresses commingling with his own hair; as she heaved quick, short gaspings, like half suffocated sobs, the firm bosom palpitated with rapid undulations against his breast. Thus, had there been aught of grossness or impurity in his imaginations, he must have yielded to such exquisite temptations; for assuredly that position was seductive enough to melt the stoicism of an anchorite or vanquish the virtue of an angel.

CHAPTER XV.

Mr. Sanford and Belle were not expected to be back home for at least a week or more. And a plot was being worked up to cause them some triuble.

The Anarchists in New York—the gang to which Phoebe Perkins had been a member, had discovered that she had given the detectives a tip about the plot hatched up against Frank Butler. They had their spies out trying to get a trace of her and her place of concealment. Every conceivable trail had been followed up and none of them gave "pay dirt" until one of them, conceived the idea of coming to Sumner and watching the Sanfords.

He had watched this home for several days without any results, until the day before the Sanfords came home, when by luck for the spy, Phoebe ventured out on the veranda and she was at once recognized by the spy.

He immediately notified his headquarters of the fact in cipher. Word was instantly sent back to him, to watch and get in touch with matters about the mansion and find out how they could get into it, in case they could not prevail upon Phoebe, by some subterfuge to get her out of doors upon the lawn, where she could be grabbed and carried off without much trouble.

Before Belle left for Washington, she cautioned Phoebe about keeping out of sight of any one. That she should stay indoors all the time while she was gone.

The time for the kidnapping happened to come on the next day after the Sanfords came home.

On this afternoon Phoebe was in the Sun Parlor, when she was startled by the scream of a small child, looking out of the window, she saw a large dog chasing a little girl upon the lawn. She immediately ran out of doors upon the lawn to

the assistance of the little girl, as she rounded a large magnolia tree, a cloth was thrown over her and she was picked up and carried to an auto that stood all gassed up in waiting, where she was hastily bundled into the same and it speeded off.

Her screams aroused Belle and she was just able to get a glimpse of the two miscreants as they ran with her to the auto. She hastened to the telephone and called up the Chief of Police and informed him of the occurrence and also told him the direction the auto took, as well as describing the auto in a very few words. The Chief sent out orders to his men to cover all the surrounding towns and highways and he notified all the towns along the line to be on watch for them. He also notified a great many people along the route they were supposed to have taken to stop a car of a certain description. He figured that they would make some small station on the railroad and get into New York as soon as possible. The New York police were instructed to arrest them, if they showed up and to hold until they could reach there.

About ten miles out of Sumner an attempt by some citizens to stop the car were futile but in a gun fusilade, the driver of the car had been hit by a bullet as the car swerved from the road and the wheel was grabbed by another party. The citizens of the next town were notified to stop the car at all hazards. To take no chances, to shoot to kill, if they did not stop, when ordered. A barricade was built in the street, there being no way to detour, the kidnappers took a chance by trying to rush and force the auto through the obstructions. The auto crashed into the debris and the force of the contact caused the auto to stall. The abductors tried to make a gun play but it was futile as they were up against some real men. They were all handcuffed and taken to the city bastile and the Sumner authorities notified. There were four of the abductors, including the chauffeur.

Phoebe was found gagged and her feet and hands tied and she was in an insensible condition. She was given immediate attention, being carried into a prominent citizen's house. In a short time she was alright with the exception of

stiffness in her arms and limbs from the cordage being too tight and interferring with her circulation.

The Sumner Chief with his men soon made their appearance after hearing of the capture. All of the abductors were taken to Sumner and lodged in jail, to await preliminary trial. Phoebe was taken in charge by Belle, who had accompanied the Chief with her car.

The prisoners asked the privilege of telegraphing to New York for a lawyer, which was granted. Phoebe was again back in her old room at the Sanford mansion.

Mr. Sanford telegraphed to the federal district attorney and insisted upon his coming to Sumner at once and be present at the trial and also to have the U. S. Marshal there to arrest them, in case they were to get out on a technicality. I have not the most confidence in our judge here. He is said to be a German sympathizer.

At the trial, their attorney attempted to have the kidnapping charged quashed, claiming that three of the men were brothers to Phoebe Perkins and the fourth was a brother-in-law and that Phoebe was a little off and had escaped from a sanitorium and that they had came on to get her as an escaped inmate. Mr. Sanford was assisting in the prosecution and after their attorney had made his claim, Sanford addressed the court and said, that if the case was as they had stated that they should have gone at it in a legal manner, and not as abductors. The judge remarked that they wanted to cause as little talk and excitement as possible and thought the way they went about it was alright, but still it might be questioned as a technicality.

He did not think they had committed anything criminal and that he did not feel the case had any serious features about it.

"How about their trying to shoot down our citizens?" replied Sanford.

"Oh, well, perhaps, they were justified in self-defense," answered the judge.

"I shall have to reserve my decislon upon the matter," ejaculated the judge.

Just wait judge, before you render that decision," said Sanford.

"We can prove that they are a gang of German anarchists and that they intended making way with Phoebe Perkins, as they had inveigled her into their club as she was in sympathy with the Germans but when they insisted upon her murdering Frank Butler, she gave the plot away to a detective. And now, you sit up there and insist they have committed no crime."

"I shall fine you $100 for contempt of court, Mr. Sanford and you will have to pay it instanter or go to jail," blustered the judge with much anger.

"Marshal, arrest that judge for bribery and being a German sympathizer," spoke up a voice. At the same time, going up to the judge and showing him that he was a U. S. district attorney.

"Also take those four prisoners in charge and iron them and search them for arms and treasonable papers that they may have upon them," said the U. S. district attorney.

After having performed these little duties, I have one more request to ask of you, marshal, and that is to search the judge. You will undoubtedly find five one hundred dollar bills upon his person. He received them today from some parties, who are in court, now,—just then a party made a rush for the door, but was apprehended by one of the deputy marshals—"Yes, that is the man that made the donation, iron him also."

The marshal went through the pockets of the judge and sure enough, he found the bills just as the U. S. attorney had said.

Never before in the history of the town of Sumner had there been such a denoument.

They were all taken to New York and securely placed in the "Tombs," New York's noted prison.

The reader may wonder how all this information was obtained.

A detectaphone was placed in a large cell room after the prisoners were placed in jail and it was in another cell room, apart from the other, in which they were first placed. They were then removed to it.

In the meantime they had sent for the judge and had fixed him with the bribe, and he was to bind them over on a small fine, with the expectation that they would put it up in cash and then skip out. But, Sanford and the U. S. authorities were too smart for them.

When their trial came up in New York, the four abductors were given a life sentence each, the one giving the judge the bribe was given twenty years and the judge thirty years.

CHAPTER XVI.

Gently depositing Mamie Simmons upon the couch, Frank inwardly hoped, by everything solemn and sacred, that she would not fall off into a faint but speedily recover. He remained standing by the couch, in that same brotherly spirit, ready to administer to her wants; nor could he very well have done otherwise, as she was so nervous, she clung to both of his hands.

"Do you feel any better, Miss Simmons?" asked Frank.

"Yes, much better, I thank you," she responded, pressing his hands as in gratitude to her bosom.

"You have been very kind to me," she murmured in a very weak tone; no brother could have been kinder or more affectionate," and she imprinted a kiss upon the hand which was nearest to her lips. Frank started perceptibly at what he thought a too tender gratitude; and the next moment Mamie suddenly abandoned her hold which she had on his hands, exclaiming, "I feel so much better now that I will return to my own prison room. But you must assist me to pass through the aperture," she added, with that musical vibration of tone which showed she was smiling at the idea.

Rising slowly from the couch and in a manner which seemed to indicate that she was still weak and feeble, Miss Simmons felt her way toward the opening in the wall, Frank following close behind her.

After a few vain attempts to pass through, she said, in a voice trembling with alarm, "Good Heavens, I can not possibly get back through the hole in the wall. You remember that you had to drag me through into your own room, and, therefore I can not pass back into my chamber unless similary assisted by some one there. What is to be done?" she demanded inpatiently.

"Compose yourself, Miss Simmons, and try once more," responded Frank.

"It is absolutely necessary for you to get back into your room or else we will be detected by the servants in the morning."

"Oh, yes, the chances of our detection have now become fearful," interrupted Mamie, clinging as if in despair to our young hero. "But it is no use for me to try and pass through that hole; I can not, it hurts me, it lacerates my flesh."

"Then what in Heaven's name are we to do?" asked Frank, more cruelly bewildered and perplexed than ever.

"There is no alternative, I fear," replied the woman, in a tone that suddenly became solemn and serious for the predicament in which she was placed indeed seemed but too well calculated to shock the feelings of a modest damsel.

"There is only one alternative, I say," she repeated, "and that is to await as patiently as we can until the first dawn of morning shall afford us a glimmer of light by which we can enlarge the aperture. This will not take long to do, and will still leave ample time ere the coming of the jailer to replace all the masonry and woodwork, and thus remove all traces of our attempted escape. I fear Mr. Butler, there is no other way out of the difficulty."

"It, indeed, appears so," observed Frank in a tone that clearly noted that he was very much embarrassed over the situation.

Our young hero and the beautiful Mamie Simmons found themselves doomed to remain together for several hours in the pitch darkness of the prison surrounded by all the temptations of this strange predicament.

CHAPTER XVII.

The fleet steamed quietly out from Hampton Roads without only the Commodore knowing its destination or the purpose of their cruise. All the seamen had to do was to obey orders without asking questions.

On account of the numerous German spies in the United States, just before the war and during the war, it was next to impossible to distinguish them, and therefore, the utmost secrecy was maintained to prevent a miscarriage of plans.

All the ships of the fleet were to follow the flagship, upon which was the Commodore.

The Atlantic Coast claimed the attention of the flagship, and orders were given to each of the several commanders of the ships to scan closely and thoroughly the coast for any of the enemy's ships hid away in any of the numerous isolated inlets or bays.

Nothing was found of a suspicious character and the Commodore decided to circumnavigate the island of Cuba.. They made a complete circuit of the coast of the island and finally dropped anchor in the harbor of Havana.

Shore lief was given to a great many of the marines and they were accompanied in most cases to the shore by some of the boats' officers. During the war most of the ships carried detectives and this fleet was no exception to the general rule.

While the fleet was anchored in Havana's harbor, the following conversation was overheard by the ship's detective as he was amusing himself in one of Havana's most popular midnight resorts on the White Way.

"With the secret wrested from Butler, we will make short work not only with our enemies in Europe but also the "smart Alex's—the yanks.

It was a woman's voice and it caused the detective, who

was seated in an alcove, out of sight of the ones talking, to sit up and take due notice.

Giving a little closer attention he heard the same party remark, "If Mamie Simmons can't get the secret formula out of him with all her personal blandishments, I shall lose my guess."

"Do you think he will fall for her, or won't he be able to fathom the trick about her being a prisoner and trying to escape?" answered her male escort.

"He is a mighty clever fellow, but you must give Mamie credit with being a very smooth 'jane.' "

"Well, I know that, but for all that, won't he get wise to her racket, no matter how clever she is in her manipulations? When she comes to get him to give her the formula of the gas," remarked the gent.

"I don't know, but just think, a young man full of pep and passion, shut up in prison, at midnight without any lights with a passionate, loving and beautiful young woman, who tries in every way to induce him to love her. He must be more than human to resist her blandishments. And if he does succumb to her wiles, she will surely get the formula from him," remarked the woman.

"Time will only tell, and tonight is the night that the big event is to be pulled off," said the man.

"It took two men several hours to cut the hole through the wall, and the poor simpleton, undoubtedly thought Mamie did it, and that her tale of woe, about being persecuted by her many admirers on account of her beauty and wealth and put in jail, would appeal to him for aid, and also give him a chance to escape. But there is only one chance of failure. He is so conscientious, that it may be impossible for Mamie to overcome his scruples, as his thoughts are undoubtedly centered upon his betrothed, Belle Sanford, and that will prove his salvation," responded the woman.

"I am anxious to get back to the island to find out how the matter turns out," remarked the man.

"When do we leave?" asked the woman.

"Tomorrow night at midnight."

"And it will take about twelve hours to reach the island?" asked the woman.

"Yes," responded the man.

"Well, then," said the woman, "let's return to the hotel and get some sleep."

Suiting the action to the word, they arose from the table and departed with the detective close in their wake.

He saw them safely housed. Going into the hotel, he casually went up to the office and casually looked over the register. Running down the page, he at last came to the names of J. C. Burbank and wife, Jacksonville, Fla.

These were the only names of man and wife on the register. After finding this out, he hastened back to the hotel where the Commodore was stopping and going to the hotel phone called up his room and succeeded in getting him to the phone. Being informed who was calling, the Commodore invited him up to his room, No. 217.

The Commodore stood at his door, awaiting the arrival of the detective. He was almost rude in his reception. He pushed him into the room and closing the door, locked it.

"Well, hurry up and tell me what you know? As I know you have something of importance to tell me."

"Let me get my breath, won't you? The elevator was out of commission at this hour of the night and I had to walk up two flights of stairs and I am almost winded," replied the detective.

"I have the whole plot in a nut shell," replied the detective. He then proceeded to tell him what the reader already knows and also the additional knowledge that Frank Butler was in prison on St. Thomas Island. It was here that blockade runners were fitted out during the civil war and was here without question, where the German raiders and submarines had headquarters.

After this information was given, the Commodore asked him, "what his plan of action was to be?"

"My idea is that you go with all your fleet except one destroyer to St. Thomas and that you steam out tonight or before day break and surround the island with your ships to prevent

the escape of any in boats from the island. Keep one destroyer back to follow Burbank's yacht," answered the sleuth.

"Your plan is alright and I will carry out the plan, but upon what boat are you going?" asked the Commodore.

"I will come in the destroyer that is to follow Burbank," replied the sleuth.

"But I want you to let me have the three young men who are acting aides, but have them dress in their civilian suits and give them instructions to report to me for orders. I also want you to give orders to the commander of the destroyer that is left behind to follow the yacht to follow my instructions," said the detective.

"It shall be as you direct," replied the Commodore. With this the interview was over as day was fast approaching, and the detective took his departure and went to the hotel where Burbank and his wife were stopping and there awaited the coming of the three aides. The detective secured a room and left orders, if any one called to see him to send him up to his room.

Shortly afterwards they made their appearance. One was sent out to the wharf to see if he could discover the Burbank yacht. The other two were to stay around the hotel to watch matters.

Along about eight o'clock in the morning Burbank and wife entered the dining room. The detective entered shortly after them and took a table next to them. In a short time one of the aides came in and took a seat at a table on the other side of the Burbanks. Not long after his entrance the second aide came in and took a seat in front of them, so that the Burbanks were almost hemmed in on three sides. This was done so that none of their conversation could escape all three of the sleuths. If one was not able to catch what they said it was quite obvious that some one of them might get the thread of their talk.

During the meal, Burbank told his wife, he would go down to the boat and see how the land lay, after breakfast. This was the opening that our detective was wanting. He had one of his aides shadow Burbank all the time he was out, while he

and the other aide remained in the lobby and on the veranda of the hotel.

They had not been waiting over an hour, until the aide, who had been dispatched to the wharf made his appearance and reported that he had found where the yacht was anchored. And that she was already for flight on a minutes' notice. He had engaged the skipper of the yacht in conversation, (who was well known to him, as he was an escaped prisoner from the United States.) The skipper recognized him also. The aide told him, he meant him no harm, but he had got to do as he requested or else, he would be arrested and taken back to the United States for trial. Now I want to know who these people are? also where they are headed for, and when. Now, there is a fleet of U. S. warships right close here and I mean business. We are almost positive that this man Burbank and the woman, he calls his wife are German spies and we want to know their game. If you value your safety, you will answer my questions truthfully as well as you know, if you do this, I will guarantee you your liberty."

"Well, you know tht I was always considered to be a man of my word, no matter how crooked I was in other matters," said the skipper.

"Yes, I know that, and that is the reason I made you the proposition," remarked the aide.

"Yes, they are German spies and their headquarters are at St. Thomas."

"Have they an American prisoner there?" asked the aide.

"Yes, he has been held there in prison about a month. They drugged him in New York and brought him upon the ship that had the gas ingredients, but they are no good to them without knowing how to mix them and they know that the American is the inventor and they are holding him as a prisoner until such a time that he will give up the formula."

"When are you going back to the island?" asked the sleuth.

"I can't just tell you as I have not received my orders as yet. Hist, get out of sight, there comes Burbank now, and there is someone shadowing him, if I mistake not," said the skipper.

The aide hastily got out of sight, and he overheard Burbank tell the skipper to be ready to steam out of the harbor within an hour, as the American fleet had left and gone south, so there was nothing to fear from that source.

After telling him this, he told him he was going back to the hotel and pack up, preparatory to sailing.

After he had gone, the aide told him that he wanted him to sail slowly out of the harbor and after he had gotten out to put on steam for about an hour and crowd the yacht to its full capacity. Then I want you to doctor the engine so she will have to slow up and go very slowly. Our destroyer is not as fast a boat as yours. But when you slow up, it will give us a chance to catch up and overhaul you. When the signal is given to hoist your colors run up your German flag. Our boat will run up the Union Jack and if anything is said, why you did not know that it was the Union Jack, but you mistook it for a German Jack. Your duty then ends, as far as I am concerned, but rest assured you will not be given away."

Soon after the aide came in, Burbank came rushing into the hotel, paid his bill and told the clerk that they were leaving.

The clerk asked him, "if he had not suddenly changed his mind."

"Yes, I received word to return at once and instead of leaving tonight, we will go as soon as we can get to the wharf. I suppose Mrs. Burbank is in her room?"

"No, she is out on the veranda."

A sleuth has been shadowing her all the time she has been out there. Burbank went to her at once and in a low tone, told her, that she must go up and get her things packed as they were to leave as soon as as possible. That the Yankee fleet had just steamed away out of the harbor, taking a southerly course and that they could get to St. Thomas without any danger of suspicion being thought of them.

This conversation was reported to the detective and he ordered the three aides to go to the destroyer and get ready to follow the yacht and to await his coming.

CHAPTER XVIII.

We must now return to Frank Butler and Mamie Simmons, whom we left together in the dead of night and in the utter darkness of a chamber in the prison.

As the reader will remember that she declared it was impossible for her to repass through the hole in the wall and an agreement had been entered into by them that she should remain there until daylight when they would enlarge the opening so that she could pass through into her own apartment.

The moment that Frank saw that it was almost necessary for her to remain with him until dawn, he was equal to the occasion and as befits a gentleman, in his conduct towards a female companion, offered her his counch as a place to rest upon and he would wrap himself up in his coat and repose in the armchair near the windows.

Acting upon this he accordingly enveloped himself in his coat and threw himself in the chair and silence reigned there for a few minutes.

"Is this not a most romantic and sigular adventure?" said Mamie, at length, in that low, tremulous, and half-plaintive voice which is ofttimes woman's most dangerous weapon- inasmuch as it steals insidiously into that heart from which the more boldly played artillery of other charms has innoculously rebounded.

"It is one of those cases which are more frequently met with in novels than in real life," answered Frank, sorry in his heart that the silence had been broken, and at the same time, he thought the young lady's voice had undergone a change since she had last spoken. Indeed, a vague and undefined suspicion stole gradually into his breast that this voice, as he last heard it, was not altogether unknown to him.

"What would the world think if it knew of this adventure?" continued Mamie, her voice appearing as if it were

passing from a feigned to a now more natural tone, as if she forgot she had been disguising it.

"The world will never know from my lips anything that might be disagreeable or unpleasant," replied Frank. But he became more suspicious every minute.

He could not tell as he had ever heard the voice before, but he was satisfied that it was undergoing a change from an assumed melody to its natural one.

"Ah you do not think, Mr. Butler," observed Mamie, her voice becoming more tremulous, as if vibrating with some strong feeling or growing passion, "you do not think that the world would give us credit for being such a good girl and boy as we really are? You fancy that the world, like a too suspicious parent, would be certain to believe that we have been naughty children?"

"Heavens, Miss Simmons," exclaimed Frank, shocked beyond expression at her indelicate remark and speaking with displeasure, "let us not talk in this strain. Indeed, unless you compose yourself and go to sleep we will not be in fit shape to accomplish all we wish to tomorrow night."

"It is impossible to sleep with a strong current of air coming through this aperture," remarked Mamie; and Frank could hear by the elastic bound of her feet alighting upon the floor that she had leaped from the couch.

"Permit me to do my best to stop up that opening," he said, arising from his seat and slowly advancing through the darkness toward the recess.

"Perhaps I can replace the panel of the wainscoting in such a manner as to protect you from the draft."

"I do not believe it possible, said Mamie, in a tone which evidently came from lips that were pouting with subdued ill-humor at the moment.

"Then let us light a light at any risk—"

"Ah, doubtless for you to see my face, now that you know the veil is off," she cried with a merry laugh.

"I can assure you Miss Simmons, that I have no impertinent curiosity of such a nature," answered Frank, in a voice coldly expressive of displeasure.

"Oh, no, no," ejaculated Mamie, her humor suddenly changing again, and this time into bitterness which she did not attempt to conceal, "you have no curiosity of any kind Mr. Butler; your heart is ice—ice to the very core. I declare that it is almost an insult to a young and beautiful woman, as I am, that you have not spoken to me a single word such as young gentlemen do speak to young ladies. There—you know what I mean—but I can not explain myself any better. At all events I feel slighted, neglected. Why don't you answer me, sir?" she exclaimed, with a petulance almost amounting to rage as she stamped her foot upon the floor.

"Heavens, what a little demoness," thought Frank within himself; but in a cold and apparently unmoved manner, he said, Miss Simmons, you thanked me just now for brotherly kindness which, as you were pleased to observe, I manifested toward you when you felt sick, and therefore you will perceive the inconsistency of at present accussing me of deliberately slighting you."

"Answer me one question, sir," exclaimed Mamie, hastily and impetuously; "do you wish to escape hence?"

"Most assuredly," answered Frank. "But wherefore a question so singular under the circumstances?"

"Because you can not escape without my assistance," returned Mamie, "and that assistance you are not so certain of having as you were just now."

"Good Heavens," exclaimed Frank, bewildered and chagrined; "is it possible that I have really offended you?"

"I have already told you," said Mamie, in a voice that again became low, deep and tremulous,—but whether with real or affected emotion Frank knew not,—"I have already told you tht men of the highest rank and most brilliant position have beseiged me with their overture, some on honorable terms, others upon dishonorable, and while I have spurned the latter, I have steadily refused the former. But wherefore? Because in my own heart I had already conjured up the ideal image of such a being as alone could win my love. To that idealism have I clung; it has been to me a dream and a worship, until at last I have felt that my very happiness depend-

ed upon its realization. I have pondered and pondered upon that image until I have led myself, as it were, to become desperately enamored of it, and I have vowed that never, never, would I bestow my affections upon any one who did not realize in his person and his mind all that was beautiful, attractive and endearing in that creation of my fancy. Conceive, then, my astonishment and my delight when on passing ere now into this chamber I beheld in you the personification of that delicious idealism."

"Miss Simmons, not another word in this strain, I conjure you, I command you," cried Butler, in a tone but too plainly indicative of outraged feeling.

"Mr. Butler," interrupted Mamie, suddenly assuming a tone of decision, "I see that it is now necessary we should thoroughly understand each other; for you are more flinty-hearted than I had at first imagined."

"Yes, let us understand each other," said Frank, since it would seem that we had mistaken each other's character,—I, in believing that you were a young lady of discretion as well as magnanimity, and you in supposing that I am unmindful of my duty alike to you and myself."

"Oh, that we might have light," exclaimed Mamie, sarcastically, "so that I might see your countenance flushing with the virtuous indignation that is doubtless now reddening it."

"But for the explanations?" said Frank, impetuously.

"They will soon be given, so far as I am concerned," answered Mamie.

"Anxious and longing as I have been to effect my escape hence, yet that aspiration has now become secondary indeed to another hope which I have conceived, and on the fulfillment of which the former shall even be made to depend. For I am self-willed, Mr. Butler, yes, self-willed and headstrong as I am petulant and impetuous; and therefore you must know, in one word, that I love you, and that if you scorn this love of mine it shall turn to the bitterest hatred."

"Miss Simmons," observed Frank, coldly indignant, "you will provoke me to say things to which I should be sorry to give utterance."

"Mr. Butler, if you mean war to the death, then war let it be," cried Miss Simmons; "but in that case, remember that I shall not hesitate to sacrifice myself in order to be revenged upon you. I will confess to the authorities about all the preparations that have been made for our escape—"

"Foolish young woman, you will draw down a terrible punishment upon yourself," ejaculated Frank. "You will perhaps be moved to another and far more dreadful prison."

"What of all that, so long as I gratify my revenge?" exclaimed Mamie.

"It is for you to decide whether you will provoke that vengeance—whether you will continue to scorn, slight and even insult me, or whether you will consent to gratify this whim I have conceived by becoming my lover for a week, a day, or only an hour, as you may choose. Oh, Mr. Butler, do not remain thus hard-hearted. Remember that I am beautiful, very beautiful, and the world will know naught of what takes place between us in an hour of yielding tenderness."

CHAPTER XIX.

Burbank and his wife made hasty preparations and departed for the wharf, where their yacht was anchored. They immediately embarked and gave the skipper orders to make haste for St. Thomas. The yacht being already steamed up, it was but a few minutes ere she was on her way headed for the island.

The yacht did not make great speed going out of the harbor but as soon as she cleared the sailing craft she put on full steam. She cut the waves at high speed.

The destroyer, in the meantime, being steamed up and ready to sail at a minutes' notice followed her and kept her in sight for a while, but the yacht's speed was more than a match for the destroyer and soon she was out of sight of the destroyer.

As per arrangement the skipper put the engine on the blink and she commenced to lose speed, he merely disarranged something about the engine's machinery that caused her to go slow.

About thirty miles out of the harbor, the destroyer espied the yacht from her lookout. Gradually the destroyer came in hailing distance, and called for signals from the yacht. The destroyer, in the meantime, had hoisted an Union Jack. The skipper, whether intentionally or not, ran up a German flag. This caused the destroyer to give her a signal to stop, which she did. When the destroyer came up, she made fast to the yacht and the commodore and his taff boarded the yacht.

"I would like to see the commander of this yacht," said the commodore.

When he made his appearance, he said: "I see you are sailing under the German flag? Who have you on board? and what is their mission and where are you going?"

"I will produce the parties, whose orders I am under and they can speak for themselves," replied the skipper.

Going to the cabin, he informed Burank and wife that they were wanted on deck. They were somewhat 'fussed' but they put up a good front and went above. When they came on deck they were presented to the commodore, by the skipper. "This is Mr. and Mrs. Burbank, under whose orders I am," said he.

"I see, you are sailing under a German flag?" but you are Americans. Please explain, how it is?" said the commodore.

"We are on a pleasure trip and have been visiting Cuba and are now going to Nasau," replied Burbank.

"Do you not know that it is a very dangerous escapade to be sailing around here, in time of war? when the United States and Germany are fighting?" asked the commodore.

"Yes, we knew that, but did not anticipate any trouble around here on account of that," answered Burbank.

"Being Americans and in American territory, why use the German flag? Are you ashamed of Old Glory?" said the commodore.

"We took you for a German raider," is the reason answered Burbank.

"Let me see your papers of clearance and your credentials to prove your statements, replied the commodore.

Going down to the cabin, he was accompanied by the commodore, as the latter did not propose that he should destroy any compromising papers.

While this was taking place the three aides made their appearance upon the yacht. As Mr. Burbank caught sight of them, she fainted, and had not come to when Burbank and the commodore came up from the cabin.

Burbank's papers did not satisfy the commodore and they went back on deck. As Burbank discovered the condition that his consort was in, consternation seized him, but still he tried to brazen it through.

"My wife is subject to fainting spells, as she is high tempered and easily unstrung and becomes very nervous at times.

However, it is only temporary and she will soon recover. If you will please excuse me I will take her below and place her on a couch and we will continue our investigation."

"I think you will be nervous, too, if you will just take a look at those three men over there, "remarked the commodore, as he pointed to his three aides. "But if that does not disturb your equilibrium, just cast your eye over at the other side, and perhaps you may see a familiar figure and a fact that is not unknown to you," remarked the commodore.

"Now, Slippery Joe, you have about run your race. We know you and your companion and we have been on your trail for some time. Now what we want is for you to come clean of the whole business and tell us about the whole plot. If you do, you and your companion will get off easier than otherwise. said the commodore.

"Well, I will not try and stall any more. You have us dead to rights. And we might as well cough up, I suppose as not," answered Slippery Joe, alias Mr. Burbank.

"Come clean, if you expect any mercy from us," said the commodore.

"Well, to begin with, I belong to a gang of German anarchists in New York. My wife—"

"How long has 'Peggy Mason' been your wife?" interrupted the detective.

"Well, she passes as my wife, anyway," answered Slippery Joe.

Peggy knows something of our schemes, but she is not a full fledged member. The gang had spies at Hopewell and knew that Frank Butler had invented a new gas, that was far superior to that in use and the Germans were determined to get hold of the formula. They also knew that a cargo had been placed on board of the Shamrock of the ingredients of the gas and that Frank Butler was to be a passenger on board the same ship.

We waylaid him in New York as he was getting ready to go on board the ship. Our plans miscarried, in so far, that we drugged him too heavy and we could not bring him too enough to get him to give up the formula. He was to have been made

way with in New York, had we gotten the formula out of him there, but fortunately for him, he was too heavily drugged and his life was saved for the present, at least. A girl was to have enticed him to his death—"

"Her name was Phoebe Perkins," interrupted the detective.

"I just mention this to refresh your memory," said the sleuth.

"We were in a quandary what to do, so Peggy and myself and Mr. and Mrs. Simmons—" "you mean 'Baldy Strong' and the girl, he abducted from up state, broke in the detective.

"I see you know all about the matter and it will be useless for me to tell the rest," said Slippery Joe.

"Go ahead," said the commodore, "I like your romance of crime."

"We were sent on board the Shamrock, ostensibly as Butler's special friends and attendants, when he was carried on board the ship.

We were out several days and our boat was captured by a German raider and both boats were headed for St. Thomas.

Mrs. Simmons, the girl from up-state, was Butler's nurse, but he was not in condition to recognize her, at least that is my opinion. She was forced to do the bidding of Simmons, who posed as her husband. She was made to try and get the secret formula of the gas from him, but she did not succeed.

When we arrived at St. Thomas, Butler was placed in prison, but he was given good attention and even had luxuries in his confinement. We were bound to get the formula and we conjured up every conceivable scheme we possibly could think of but the most feasible appeared to us, was to have Mamie Simmons, ostensibly a prisoner in an adjoining room, and have her dig her way to freedom through his cell. After getting into his room, in the darkness of the night by her wiles succeed in getting the formula.

However, I want to say a word for Mamie. She is innocent of any wrong doing of her own free will, but she has been forced to do as she has done on the pain of death," said Slippery Joe.

"Is Butler imprisoned now on the island?" asked the detective.

"Yes," answered Joe.

"Please give us the location, so we can find it easily," remarked the detective.

This he did.

The yacht was put in charge of some of the destroyer's men and it steamed ahead of the warship until they came in the vicinity of the island.

The yacht's crew and the Burbanks had been transferred to the destroyer.

CHAPTER XX

"Temptress, who art thou?" exclaimed Frank, now becoming angry and almost enraged. "Thy voice is familiar to me; I am certain I have heard it before—"Yes," interrupted Mamie, in a low voice; "and I have seen you before and I know more of you than thou thinkest, and I could breathe in thy ear the name of a young lady, that would make you sit up and take notice," replied Mamie.

"Then who art thou? Tell me who thou art," exclaimed Frank, becoming more and more excited; "for there is somethin so strange, so mysterious in all this."

"Stay, let me whisper a name in your ear," said Mamie, "and then you will see I know a great deal about you."

"Speak aloud Miss Simmons," cried Frank, who perceived by the rustling of her dress that she was approaching him through the pitchy darkness which prevailed.

"Ah, you are afraid of me" she exclaimed scornfully. "Oh, what sickly sentimentalism, what a maudlin affection of virtue is all this. Even the beauteous Belle Sanford, herself," she continued with a marked accentuation upon a name which made Frank start suddenly, "could scarce think well of one who seems not to be made of flesh and blood."

"You have alluded to a lady," said Butler, "whose example it were well, Miss Simmons, if you would follow. But let me beseech you to put an end to all this junk, it is not only being painful, but humiliating and ridiculous."

There was a dead silence of nearly a minute, and then the woman's voice suddenly vibrated upon Frank's ear, exclaiming, "Oh, I love you, I love you," and the next instant he heard her come bounding toward him like a serpent flinging its coils through the utter darkness at some object which a mysterious instinct impelled it to seize upon, so that ere Frank

had leisure to step back even a couple of paces, he was clasped in the arms of his midnight companion.

Violent was that embrace, as if the young woman's impassioned nature were wrought up to a frenzied pitch.

The pulump white arms were thrown so suddenly around his neck and held him in so firm a clasp, and the lips of the temptress were instantaneously glued to his own with so burning an intenseness, that it seemed as if it were impossible for him to escape from the empire of such an Amazonian assailant. But, immediately recovering his presence of mind, he endeavored to disengage himself from her embrace. in which, however, she held him with all the greater tenacity. He used a little more violence, and she clung to him with the force of despertion.

"Miss Simmons, take care, I shall do you mischief," cried Frank.

"You would not ill-use a woman," replied Mamie; and she covered his face with frantic kisses, as if hurried away by the torrent of raging passions which she could not control.

"By Heaven, this is intolerable," cried Frank. "O, shameless young woman."

"Ah, revile, abuse me as you will," said Mamie, with a triumphant tone; "but I will either perish or compel you to fall vanquished into the arms of my consummated desires."

"You force me to extremes," cried Frank, now seizing both her arms and somewhat violently disengaging them from his neck.

Mamie struggled desperately to retain her hold, and Frank could hear her gasping and moaning with rage, like a subdued tigress, when she found herself baffled and defeated in the combat. But be it understood that he exhibited not the slightest unnecessary violence toward her; he merely put forth his strength to a sufficient degree to unlock her arms from his neck. The struggle was nevertheless a difficult one, inasmuch as it took place in the depth of a pitchy darkness, and it was therefore no fault of Frank's if Mamie, suddenly tripping over a rug, fell heavily upon the floor, where she remained senseless.

For a few moments Frank though deeply greived at this incident, fancied that her immovability and silence were only a pretence, but finding that she continued thus still and speechless, he stooped down and laid hand upon her forehead. It was cold, and there was a clammy perspiration upon it. Beginning to be seriously alarmed, he placed his hand upon her heart, and felt that though it beat, the pulsation was nevertheless slow and feeble. A mortal terror now seized him, for he feared that she might be in reality seriously injured and perhaps about to die, and for a few instants he felt so bewildered as scarcely to know what course to pursue.

However, he lighted a candle and held it over her countenance and an ejaculation escaped him. Heavens, was it possible. His suspicion was confirmed. But as he thus emitted the words, she opened her eyes and looked up to him and then gave vent to a cry of almost despair. This incident showed Frank that she was no one else than the woman, who had acted as nurse on the boat to him and who claimed to be the wife of a companion, who was with her.

"You know me?" said Mamie.

"Indeed, I do. But it is a mystery to me why you have acted toward me as you have. What incentive have you for so doing?" asked Frank.

"Well, sit down, and I will act like a lady. Please forgive me, for it was a frame up, my escape," said Mamie.

"Now, if you can trust me, and you will have no reason to do otherwise and I will explain everything. I am not the depraved person you may think, still I can blame you for having a bad opinion of me. I was merely acting a part and my feelings got the better of me, as I admire you as a perfect gentleman. I have learned to respect you. If a man was ever tempted and not fallen, you are the man. But to my story.

I was abducted from up-state in New York. My people are respectable and well to do. I was abducted from my home. The man, you saw me with was the man, who tempted me. He came to our town and acted the part of a wealthy man, who was looking up a location. I met him at a church fair. He called several times to see me and finally invited me

out for an auto ride and carried me to New York against my wishes. It was the same old story of numerous other girls.

I was not long in finding out that he was a German spy and belonged to a gang of cut-throats, but I was under a spell and I was also watched so that I could not escape. When you were drugged, word was sent to us and to a man and woman, who go by the name of Burbank to take the boat that you was carried on, drugged. If they had gotten the secret formula cut of you, before you were insensible, they would have killed you. In fact there was a young girl selected to kill you, Phoebe Perkins, but she got cold feet and ran away.

When you were placed upon the boat, I was delegated to act as nurse to you and try and get your formula from you. And that was the scheme, of the escape. The conspirators thought if I got the best of you, that you would easily give up the formula. Now that is the whole scheme. But believe me or not, Frank, I have learned to respect you and I do hope that you will forgive me for my actions."

"Your story is simply astounding Miss Simmons, and I actually do believe you," remarked Frank.

"But what I want to know is, how are we going to escape?"

"I dont know—" just then there was a loud report of guns from two sides of the island.

CHAPTER XXI

The destroyer and the yacht proceeded on to St. Thomas, and as they approached the island, they perceived that it was practically surrounded by the fleet, although miles distant from it. Our friends made their way to the flag ship and had a conference with the commodore in charge.

He was given the information about everything that had taken place since he had left Cuba. He learned of the capture of the alleged Burbank and his scheming wife, and in fact gave them the whole plot as told by Burbank.

He learned for the first time of the whereabouts of Frank Butler and how he had made his disappearance and that he was a prisoner upon the island.

"Our first thing to do is to prevent the escape of any one from the island and in order to do this we will have to draw the fleet in closer and to surround the island, in the closest manner possible."

"But the island belongs to a European country," said the captain of the destroyer.

"I know that, but it is one of the allies," replied the commodore.

"We may, perhaps have to bombard it, but, it will be excusable as it is infested by the enemy," remarked the commodore.

Orders were signaled the other ships of the fleet to draw in closer to the island and to prepare for bombardment.

A salute was ordered by the commodore. This apparently had no effect. He then ordered a shot fired at an isolated building. When the island authorities saw the building wrecked they came to their senses and realized that the Americans meant business, they ran up a flag of truce.

One of the destroyers were sent into the harbor and the members of its crew found the islanders very much wrought up about what they called a high-handed outrage upon a friendly ally.

"Yes, that maybe so, but you have placed yourselves without the pale of friendship by assisting an enemy in giving them a rendezvous. Where are they? Speak up, at once, with no subterfuge," said the captain of the destroyer.

"We have no Germans here," replied the island official.

"Officer, arrest him. We will soon find out whether there are any Germans or German spies here, and methinks our 'friend' here will be perfectly willing to tell us all the particulars," remarked the captain.

As the officer stepped up to arrest the island official, he said, "Hold, I will tell all and conceal nothing."

"Well, I thought you would come to your senses very soon," replied the captain.

The islander said, "that there were a number of German sympathizers there, and that upon the report of the guns they had hied themselves to the prison—" "Yes, they know their proper place, I suppose," interrupted the captain. Is that where Frank Butler is imprisoned?"

"Yes," replied the islander.

"Take us there at once."

The island official lead the way and as they approached the building, they discovered a crowd of people, but were unobserved by them, as yet.

"Surround the building with your men, lieutenant, and don't let a single person escape, even if you have to kill some of them. Dont't hesitate to shoot if any one is trying to escape. Make an example of him and that will prevent any of the rest in trying the same thing," said the captain.

Quietly the building was surrounded ere any of the enemy was aware of what was taking place. When the signal was given by the lieutenant that they had perfected their cordon, the captain came out in sight of the crowd and ordered them to surrender. They were amazed and almost stunned at first, then they commenced to look around for means of escape.

"There is no use for you people to try to escape as the place is surrounded by marines and the island is surrounded by a fleet of American warships. Where is Frank Butler? And who is your captain or head man here?" asked the American captain.

No one spoke. "You certainly have some one who is authority here. If you have not, I will arrest you all as German spies and you all know what that means. Men arrest them and search them and take all guns, papers and anything that may incriminate them. And you, Mr. Island Official, conduct me to the place where Frank Butler is imprisoned. I also want you to tell me where Simmons and his wife are," said the captain.

The prisoners were given over to the marines and they were all marched down to where the destroyer was anchored, and a signal was given for the commodore to come in.

When the flagship steamed into the harbor, the prisoners were ordered on board the warship.

The commodore was not long in finding out who was the king-pin of the outfit, as he took one of the men to one side and told him, if he wanted to save his skin, he would answer his questions. The man readily agreed to tell all he knew. After finding out, who was the man in authority of the gang from him, he allowed him to slip in among the rest unnoticed by any of them.

The commodore went into the cabin among the prisoners and asked Captain Benson to step forward. No one made a move, but the commodore noticed that all eyes were centered upon the man he wanted. "Now, I shall call out Captain Benson once more, and it would be better for him to step out, and still no one came forward. The commodore, then ordered one of the lieutenants to go and get that man," as he pointed him out. The officer did as told, however, the man offered some little resistance and the officer handled him quiet roughly.

The commodore asked him as he came before him, why he did not acknowledge who he was? Surely, you did not think we were such chumps as not to find out, did you Possibly, you thought all your spies were bound by their iron-clad

oath and that they would not squeal on you."

When he said spies, there was a change upon the countenance of Benson and a sort of pallor was present upon the faces of all the rest of the crowd.

"Where is the American ship that was captured? And what have you done with Frank Butler?" Just then there was a commotion out on the deck and shortly a man was pushed within the room folowed up by Frank Butler and a woman. The officer, who brought them in touched his cap and said:

"Commodore, this is the man Simmons and the woman is his supposed wife, but she is not."

"Yes, I have heard of them," remarked the Commodore.

"Commodore" said Butler," can I have a word with you in private?"

"Surely, my boy," answered he.

Frank and Commodore went out on the deck and the former told him of his experience with Mamie Simmons in a very few words.

"How that she was a daughter of a prominent New Yorker and had been abducted from her home by Simmons and made to comply with his wishes under a threat of death if she did not do as he said, thus being under duress. Another thing she was kept in close confinement until she was put aboard the steamer that carried her to St. Thomas. She, thus was not strictly to blame for her actions, although technically guilty. She desired to get away from the gang but she had no opportunity. She does not wish to go back home at present but wants to go across the seas and become a nurse in the American army and to try to attone for her former actions and sins against the government, while with this anarchistic gang.

Now, Commodore, can't you arrange to have her taken overseas and placed in a hospital and thus be of service to our flag? I believe her to be sincere, and I positively know that she is truly repentant of the things she has been coerced to do."

"Well, my boy, you are a good advocate and what you have said appeals to me, and I think the matter can be arranged along the lines you have suggested. She will be separated, at once from the gang, as I will see to it, that she is properly

cared for," remarked the Commodore.

One of the destroyers was commissioned to take the German spies to New York and a sealed letter was given to the captain of the ship to deliver to the Secretary of the Navy.

This despicable horde of humanity, with the exception of Mamie, was loaded onto the destroyer and it soon steamed away from St. Thomas, destined for New York.

CHAPTER XXII

The town of Charlotte, Amelia was beautiful and picturesque. It had one of the finest harbors in the West Indies, deep enough to float the largest warships, with shipyards and dry docks and repair shops. Looking from the deck of a vessel as she came into the harbor it was a strikingly beautiful picture, formed by three spurs of mountains covered with the greenest of tropical foliage. From the edge of the dancing blue waves the town itself arose on the hills, presenting an entrancing panorama.

The walls of the houses were mostly of a dazzling whiteness, though some were yellow, others gray, orange and blue. But the roofs were all of a generous bright red, which showed up very effectively among the clumps of green trees. Indeed, the town seemed to be one of gaily tinted villas and palaces. There were no factories, no slums. Nature had provided against that and man had not violated the provision.

The people were mostly negroes, still there was a fair sprinkling of whites. English is the language mostly spoken.

As we remarked the harbor was a fine one and it was large, so that a ship could be stored away and not easily found.

Frank Butler told the Commodore that he was sure that the American ship that had been captured was in the harbor, but he thought that it had been repainted, possibly.

The Commodore said that a thorough search would be made of the harbor at once. . The town was duly picketed with marines and the remaining ships were guarding the entrance of the harbor.

A search was made of the harbor and sure enough the American ship was concealed a way back in the harbor and the ship had been repainted and renamed. She was also loaded with the gas ingredients the same as when she left the

United States.

In the letter to the Secretary of the Navy, the Commodore advised him to send Col. DuPont down to the island as soon as possible.

In about fifteen days a squadron of ships were discovered approaching the island from the North. Upon close inspection it was discovered that they were Americans. A salute was fired from the approaching fleet and an answer given back from the island.

It was not long until the fleet steamed into the harbor.

Col. DuPont was among the passengers. He hunted up Frank the first thing and was overjoyed to see him.

Explanations were made and orders were given to proceed across the seas to England and take the American freighter, loaded with the gas along.

Col. DuPont told Frank that he had better accompany the fleet as he would be needed to instruct the Americans in mixing the ingredients for making the gas. That after he had done this, he should return back to America.

In the meantime, I will inform your good friends in Sumner that you are all O. K., and will be home ere long, as you will have to appear as a witness in trial of the spies.

The fleet sailed for England with the exception of several destroyers that were left to guard the island and also one was sent back to New York with Col. DuPont.

Mamie sailed with the fleet to England. She was quartered on the flagship.

All these proceedings were transacted with so much secrecy that no one outside of the ones directly interested knew ought about them.

Mamie was given a place in a French hospital where we will leave her for the present. Frank spent a couple of months in France, when he sailed for America. The German spies were all imprisoned in a prison, far removed from any one who might be able to learn about them. They were guarded by trusted guards and by so doing, a great many of the anarchists were rounded up one by one and no one was the wiser about how.

The gang of spies and anarchists that were captured on the island, together with those that were rounded up later in New York, from information gleamed from the gang were tried by the federal authorities and found guilty, were given from five years to life in solitary confinement. But, a new idea the judge had and he acted upon it, after consulting with the authorities at Washington. They were all deported and sent to the American commander on the firing line with instructions to have them sent across No-Man's Land with a flag of truce and instructions to the German commander.

In this letter he was told that the Americans had no farther use for this gang of cutthroats and murderers and that they had been caught red-handed, tried, convicted and sentenced. But upon due consideration, it was thought they would cause the Germans more trouble than they had the Americans, and for that reason they were returned, but, however, with the injunction, that if any of them ever stepped a foot on American soil, no matter when, the sentence would be carried out to the letter. Farther, the instructions read, that if any more spies of theirs were caught, they would be shot as soon as found guilty.

As soon as Frank landed in New York, he repaired to the New York office of Col. DuPont. Fortunately, he caught him at the office. After the usual greetings, Frank asked the Colonel, "What he wanted him to do?"

"What do you want to do?" asked the Colonel.

"I want to make a trip down to Sumner and then I want to visit my parents in Illinois, whom I have not seen in about a year," answered Frank.

"I knew that you would want to go to South Carolina," said the Colonel, "but I just wanted to see if you would say so."

"Oh, yes, I will have to plead guilty," said Frank.

Laying his hand upon Frank's shoulder, he said: "My boy, you are at liberty to do as you desire and on salary, at that. I think you have earned a vacation. Take what time is necessary, but keep me informed as to your whereabouts, as something might come up which would make it imperative that I should communicate with you."

Calling in his secretary, he whispered something to him. The secretary, went into the adjoining room and soon came back and handed the Colonel a paper. The Colonel then proceeded to sign his name to a check. After signing, the Colonel handed it to Frank. The latter saw that it was a check for his late salary and also for the next two months with expense money as he was about to place it in his pocket book, he discovered another paper, which upon reading, he found it to be a check for a $1,000.

"What's this second check for," asked Frank in amazement.

"To pay your honeymoon expenses," said the Colonel with a smile.

"You must be a mind reader Colonel," said Frank.

"No, just a close observer of things," remarked the Colonel.

"Now, Frank, seen the subject has come up, I want to say a word, and I am saying it out of regard and friendship to you. I know how the land lays between you and Belle Sanford. You can hunt the world over, and you can never find a truer girl than Belle Sanford and she fairly worships you, and I know that you reciprocate her love. Now, then, what's the matter of going down to Sumner and get a license and getting married quietly at the home of Belle without any ostentotion?" said the Colonel.

"Well, Colonel, you have hit the nail squarely on the head, that was my intention, if Belle and her parents were agreed to it. If the event came off like that, I intended, taking Belle out to visit my parents."

Frank, shortly after this conversation left the office and took the first train to Sumner.

He telegraphed to Belle that he would be at Sumner on the next day's evening train.

Imagine, reader, if you can the feelings of joy that animated Belle upon receiving the telegram. She hastened to her mother and danced about as her mother was reading it. "I

am so happy, mother. To think, that he whom we had given up for lost, will be here, less than twelve hours. Why, I can't contain myself. I can hardly wait," said Belle.

"Just compose yourself my dear daughter, he can't get here quicker than the train. You can have him all to yourself, soon," said the mother.

The train bringing Frank finally arrived and Belle was there to meet him. She watched closely as the people alighted but she was quite awhile ere she discovered Frank. He got off the rear coach. When she did see him, she ran to him and made a jump at him and threw her arms around his neck and planted kiss after kiss upon his face. Frank was somewhat embarrassed, but he well knew Belle's disposition, as every one else did, who were acquainted with her.

She was impulsive and did not stand upon conventionalities and no one thought funny of her, but said, "that's Belle for you."

She could hardly leave him alone long enough to look after his personal baggage. They finally did get to the auto.

"Well, my old buddy, I am more than delighted to see you and have you with us again," said Belle, as they go into the car.

"I am just as glad to be here as you are to have me," remarked Frank.

The most delicious music is dull and vapid in comparison with the melody of the lover's voice when softly syllabling the name of the adored one. Deep, deep into the soul it sinks, not with a force that jars upon the tender cords of the heart, but gentle and tender, as the balmy breeze laden with the perfume of roses steals upon the strings of an Aeolian harp, awakening all the delicious pathos of its murmuring melody.

Mrs. Sanford greeted Frank with a loving embrace, such as a mother would give a dearly beloved son, who had been away for a long spell. Mr. Sanford was overjoyed at Frank's safe arrival and a regular love feast was had by the quartette.

We will pass over the many things that took place in the Sanford home. But suffice it to say, that Frank's request for a

speedy and a private marriage was acquiesced in by Belle and her parents.

The wedding ceremony was solemnized by their family pastor and within a week after Frank's arrival, he and Belle were on their honeymoon trip to the home of Frank's parents out in the 'succor' state.

CHAPTER XXIII

Their stay at Frank's parents' home was one continuous round of receptions, fetes and feasts and it was prolonged for over a month. And his parents were quite loth to let them leave. Belle wormed herself into their affections like one of their daughters. However, after a little over a month's stay Frank told his parents that they would have to be going as he had a living to make for two ,now, instead of one. They returned home by the way of Niagara Falls, where Belle had never been. They rounded up their six weeks' honeymoon trip by returning to Sumner, where they were very joyfully received by Mr. and Mrs. Sanford. A grand ball was given in their honor by their particular admirers, which was attended by the notables from far and near. Col. DuPont and wife were specially invited guests and they took advantage of the invitation.

The matter of where they were going to reside was a paramount issue with the father and mother of Belle. And also what business Frank was to follow. They did not want him to keep with the powder people as it was a dangerous business and a man working for the company running great risks, especially was it so in the case of the position that Frank held with the company. Mr. Sanford broached the subject to Col. DuPont when he was at the ball and casually mentioned the fact, that possibly they could get Frank to resign and that he would like to have the Colonel consent to it, if he did tender his resignation. The Colonel said he would.

The subject of their residence had been discussed by Belle's parents, while they were on their honeymoon trip. And as an inducement, Mrs. Sanford had purchased one of the best residences in the city and had it all refitted and refurnished and made modern in every respect. The grounds were nicely

dressed, the old inviting shade trees had had all of their dead limbs cut out and a new brick garage had been erected and everything put in first class shape. A housekeeper had even been engaged and she had had charge of the house for a week or more before their return.

There were two positions that appealed to him as suitable for Frank to accept. Col. Sanford was president of the largest bank in the town, and the assistant cashier was going to leave as he was to accept the position of cashier in a bank in an adjoining town, where a number of his relatives lived, but he told them he would stay until they secured some one to take his place. The other place was in newspaper work. There were two papers in Sumner and the oldest and most influential was owned and edited by a man up in years and he wished to retire as he was quite well off financially. (Something that don't happen to many newspaper men.) This plant could be purchased at a fairly reasonable price.

Col. Sanford thought that one or the other of the positions might appeal to Frank. If he did not want the job in the bank and had rather take on the newspaper, it was up to Frank. Col. Sanford did not think Frank had any money to put into the plant but the Colonel was willing to buy the plant and make Frank and Belle a wedding present of the same.

Frank ad Belle had been at home several days when he and his father-in-law happened to be alone out upon the veranda. In fact, the women people were privy to this meeting, as it had been prearranged among the three.

Col. Sanford said to Frank, "I hope you won't think me inquisitive or trying to pry into your business, but I would like to ask you a question, and I don't want you to take any offense, as none is intended."

"I am ready for any question you may ask me and I will answer truthfully," replied Frank.

"'I would like to know what your future plans are," said the Colonel.

"I expect to go back to Hopewell and take my old job back," answered Frank.

"I would like to suggest a plan," replied the father-in-law.

He then unfolded the two propositions the reader knows about. Frank told him "he knew nothing about the banking business and he was afraid he might make a mess of it. The newspaper business appealed to him, but he did not have the necessary capital."

"If you had the capital, would you be willing to go into it?" said Sanford.

"Yes," replied Frank. "The newspaper business always appealed to me, and many a time have I wish I had the money to buy out a plant or start a new one."

"Well, consider the matter settled. I will furnish the money and will buy out the local paper—The Chronicle—at once," replied Sanford.

Frank commenced to offer some objections about his spending his money on an uncertain quantity, as he, Sanford, did not have any means of knowing whether he would make a success of it or not.

Col. Sanford told him, "that the matter was now closed as far as Frank was concerned and that he need have no worry as to his making a success of it, and that he had found out what the paper could be bought for, and in fact, he had a ten days' option on it. So the matter was settled without farther argument. The Colonel bought the paper the next day and was to have possession of the same the first of the coming month, which was about twenty days. This gave the proprietor a chance to get his business in shape and it also gave Frank a chance to get onto the running of the plant.

Frank left the next day for Hopewell to resign his position there and to fix up all of his personal matters.

Col. DuPont was a little loth about accepting Frank's resignatio, letting on that it was a complete surprise to him, but with Frank's explanation, his resignation was accepted. But Col. DuPont asked him, if they got into anything that needed his advice, if he would consent to come up and help them out. Frank agreed to do so.

A few days after his return from Hopewell, Mr. and Mrs. Sanford and he and Belle rode around the city, looking at the fine homes and admiring them, when finally coming to the

home Mrs. Sanford had bought for them, Mr. Sanford purposely drove slowly and gave Frank a chance to take in the beauty of this elegant home. "There is a place that suits me the best of anything in town except your home."

"We will stop the car, so you can see all the beauties round about the house. Those old stately trees, the beautiful shaven lawn, those fragrant roses and that clinging ivy. Let us get out and go in and see the house on the inside. The people who own it are friends of mine and they will not think anything out of the way our coming in, in fact, they will be glad to see you both, said Col. Sanford, with a sly wink at Belle and her mother.

As they walked up the stone flag walk, Frank was all enthusiasm over his surroundings. And as they stepped upon the wide veranda with all kinds of easy porch furniture, his eyes were as bright as dollars.

Col. Sanford rang the door bell and a female maid answered it.

She invited them in. The Colonel asked if the people were at home and the maid said, "no."

"Have you any objections of showing us over the house?" said Mrs. Sanford.

"Not in the least," answered the maid with a merry twinkle in her eye.

They inspected the house from cellar to garret and everything had a freshness about it that made it entrancing and still Frank never had the least bit of suspicion that he was being played with.

Frank said, "it was the most ideal home he ever saw." At that juncture Mrs. Sanford stepped up to him and handed him a large paper. He did not know what to think of it and to satisfy himself he opened it and he found that it was a deed and that of that same home and it was made out to him and Belle as a wedding present from Mrs. Sanford. Tears started up in Frank's eyes, his voice was clogged but going up to Mrs. Sanford he caught her in his arms and kissed her so affectionately that she was moved to tears All he could say was "thank you my dear mother." Then going up to the Colonel

he took hold of his hand and squeezed it with a tight grip and placing his other hand on his shoulder, he looked him straight in the eye and said, "why are you so good to me?" "Surely there is method in your madness. And I am almost sure that you will never have cause to regret of your many kindnesses to Belle and me." He could say no more. Tears got the best of him. But Belle went up to him and placing her arms about him, said. "cry all you want to, it is all right as long as they are tears of joy."

"We will now go back home and you and Belle get your personal belongings and commence tonight to keep house. No house is large enough for two families. You will find your larder well stocked up with all kinds of edibles and this housekeeper will look after the house for you, if you want her," said the father-in-law.

So we find them duly installed in their new home.

Upon assuming the control of The Chronicle, the following salutatory, along on the line of a Jefferson, appeared in the first issue after Frank took charge.

"We believe in equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state of pursuasion, religious or political, peace, commerce and honest frendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none; the support of the State governments in all their rights, as the most competent administration for our domestic concerns and the surest bulwarks against anti-Republican tendencies; the preservation of the general government in its whole constitutional origin, as the sheet-anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people; a mild and safe corrective of abuses, which are lopped by the sword of revolution where peaceful remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principal and immediate parent of despotism; a well disciplined militia, our best reliance in peace and for the first moments of war until regulars may relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; economy in the public expense, that labor may be lightly burdened; the honest payment of our debts, and sacred preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture and of

commerce as its handmaid; the diffusion of information and arraignment of all abuses at the bar of public reason; freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of person, under the protection of the habeas corpus, and trial by juries impartially selected."

We also stand for the greater uplift of our town and community and are forinst all manner of shams, whatsoever. These principles are the creed of our political faith.

All our news will be free from personal opinions. If we have any criticisms to make it will be done in our editorial department. Farther, this paper is not controlled by any clique or clan and the man, whose name is at the mast head of the paper is responsible for everything in the paper.—Frank Butler.

After the first issue of the paper, a young attorney made the remark that "a Yankee had no business editing a paper in the South. He should go back North, where he belongs. That it was a Democratic country, below the Mason and Dixon line and the people did not want them there."

"You make a mistake, young man," said a prominent judge "in calling Frank Butler a Yankee. He has a better right, according to your own theory, to live here than you have. You are from Mississippi and have only been here, about two years, while Frank Butler was born here and lived the first three years of his life here, and now has been here almost a year at the present time."

"Oh, that don't make any difference, he was educated in the North," replied the young attorney.

"Well, I plainly see there is no use arguing with you, as you are wanting in good common sense," saying this the judge turned on his heel and left the young attorney grumbling to himself.

Things ran along smoothly and in an even tenure of their way for Frank in the newspaper business until election time. Nominations were to be made for the local city election. Bonds for improvements had been voted upon and carried and now it was a question for the voters to elect men to office, who would use the bonds properly and for the purpose they were

intended for. The people did not care so much about their taxes being raised, if they could see the uses to which they wyere applied. In other words they wanted an economic administration and all useless offices eliminated. A great number of names were suggested to fill the different offices. The city had two parties, the Citizens' and the Peoples'. Politics were wholly eliminated as far as city affairs were concerned.

The most logical man for mayor was not a native son. He was born in another state, but still he was the best fitted man for the office of mayor. It was a "sweet morsel to roll under the tongues" of some of the old moss backs who had never been five miles away from home. They were so narrow minded and bigoted that they could not see an inch from their nose.

Frank came out with a strong editorial in The Chronicle, "advocating the nomination of this man, and he suggested that a man's ability should not be limited to the narrow confines of being a native son, neither should his personal worth be lost to the city. That he was the best fitted for the place. Had not only business ability to make his own personal matters successful, but he was the most enterprising man in the city. And that if they were believers in the Bible, they should heed the injunction of not hiding your talents under a bushel. Our idea is, that we should put in our very best men at the present time and not be blinded by any little idiosyncracies, whatever. What we want is honest men in office and a go-getter and not a mere figure-head."

"He said farther: "Too many folks in the world, that are not honest, either by training or by nature, forget to appear what they are, and so go through the world appearing to be honest and upright, and trying to make others believe they are. There are lots of wolves that forget where they take off their clothes at night, and get up in the morning and put on the clothing that belongs to the sheep; and they'll wear them all day. There are farmers that will haul load after load of wood to town and sell it for so many cords, and forget where their measuring stick is; and there are merchants who forget to balance their scales. There are lawyers that forget that truth is an essential element in trying a case, and ministers that forget

that the eye of the Lord is upon them when then are stealing their sermons as well as the eye of the critic, when they are delivering them from the sacred desk. The office seeker forgets, after his election, every promise he made before it, and what is worse than all else, the husband and the wife too frequently forget those pledges of love and faithfulness and sobriety.

Of all the sad things in this world, the saddest is when memory between plighted mates for life is lost to the extent that not only is duty neglected, but affection chilled forever, hearts crushed and bleeding, to rise no more. The strength of government rests upon the strength of the homes. Every home is a foundation stone upon which the superstructure rests. If the individual homes throughout the county fall to ruin by forgetfulness, the government will surely follow."

There was considerable comment made upon this editorial but the consensus of opinion agreed with it. The sequel of the whole affair was that Frank's man was nominated and elected by a big majority, notwithstanding he was not a native son.

CHAPTER XXIV

The next event that made "the old moss-backs" sit up and take notice about, was something that took place at the polling places in the different parts of the city and county.

There were some over a hundred boys who had gone across the seas to "Make Democracy safe for the United States." When the boys were inudced to enlist, they were told by these old slackers, that if they would enlist, there was nothing too good for them to have at the hands of the people. A number of the boys thought they meant it, while some of those who were wise, knew that it was just a "bluff game" they were working.

All these boys sent their absentee votes home to be voted at the presidential election. Well, what was done? Did the boys' votes go in as they indicated. We should say not. The different election boards, which was controlled by the Democrats voted over 90 per cent of them for the Democratic nominee. Whereas, they had given instructions to the contrary, as they wanted to vote for the Republican nominee. The election board, simply switched them.

When these facts were whispered around quietly at first, Frank decided that their action called for drastic measures and his paper came out with a ringing editorial denouncing this high-handed outrage upon the boys, who were giving up their lives to save the slacker thieves. He stated that any one who had a hand in the affair should be sent to the penitentiary for a long time at hard work. Even to think that these slackers were at home enjoying life and making money and drawing big salaries from the government, while these boys were across the seas, taking their lives in their hands, to protect these same ones, and the boys were getting the princely salary of $1 per day. Politics is a fine art, and one that requires a good deal

of shrewdness and studying. It consists of a thorough knowledge of how to bamboozle the people, or, in other and more comprehensive language, how to pull the wool over the eyes of the people so they can only see the outside of you. The bold outlines in this art is to work all the points to insure the candidates election. The deep shades and dark background is the principal work done after he is elected."

This editorial created a regular furore and such a howl went up, never was known in Sumner. No one ever had the nerve to tell these election stealers where to get off and to make it patent to all, just what they did.

All kinds of threats were made against Frank and an attempt to boycott it was made, but it signally failed. The merchants were threatened to be boycotted if they did not stop advertising in the Chronicle. They simply gave them the ha, ha, and told them, they were running their own business, and that if they listened to any one in regard to a matter of like nature, they would consult parties, who did not go out of town to buy a pair of overalls or a pound of crackers. Why, your trade is no good to us any way. As far as your patronage is concerned, we do not know you are living in town.

We are going to patronize a paper that is read by the people. We would be willing to bet dollars to doughnuts that there has not been an issue of the Chronicle that you have not read and still you never spent a cent for a Chronicle. You slip into some of the stores and steal your reading. Of how much value, do you think you are to the town?

Most of us are not of the same political belief as the editor of the Chronicle, but we are glad he has had the temerity to expose you fellows in your nefarious work, you have been carrying on at the polls ever since the war. It is just such things as that that has retarded the growth of the South. Not until Northern capital commenced to come down into this country, were we the least bit prosperous. The sooner that this ballot box fraud is stopped, the better it will be for the South.

This action of the merchants rather put a quietus upon their agitating the matter farther. But Frank was not through yet, on the matter of fraudulent elections.

One part of the county was strongly Republican and in two precincts in this district over three hundred Republicans were kept from voting by the dilatory tactics of the Democratic judges and in one of the precincts, they refused to count out the ballots, until they heard from the rest of the county, finding that the rest of the county had turned in a Republican majority, the Democratic judges allowed the vote to be counted.

The Chronicle editorial was a scorcher on this proceeding and the matter was referred to the U. S. district attorney and he simply passed the matter up, but the Republicans here were not satisfied and they took it before congress in the shape of a contest for congressman. But the Republicans had such an enormous majority in the house that they passed it up.

These are the things that makes the Solid South.

The editorial wound up with the following: "Men, who are guilty of stealing a vote or doing crooked work to get votes and manipulate shady measures to gain their point in an election, is crooked at heart and he is not worthy of any one's confidence, let him be a deacon in the church and high-monkey-de-monk in some prominent secret order. He is not a desirable citizen any where you place him, for he is always on the lookout for aggrandizement of self."

Another thing came to light and that was the way the Democratic registers worked the illiteracy test. If an illiterate Democrat came to list, he was registered without any questions being asked, but if a Republican offered to register, who could not read or write, he was refused registration. A number of elderly people, who had sons in the war and protected the bacon of these same slacker registers, who had been voting under the "grandfather" clause were refused registration, because they happened to be Republicans.

In an editorial the Chronicle said: "That the registers were sworn to live up to the law and, it was their understanding that there should not be any difference made no matter which ticket a person voted. And that any registrar who did make a difference and it could be proven against him, he ought to be sent to the penitentiary and the right of franchise taken from him."

The howl that went up on account of this editorial could be heard all over the wilds of South Carolina. Some hotheads suggested that they mob the Yankee editor and others were in for tearing down his plant and some wanted to take him out and tar and feather him. Frank was not frightened the least bit over these mumblings and kept right along giving them a paper that about all could hardly wait for the next paper to be printed, so eager were they to see what he had to say.

In the meantime the advertising kept rolling into the Chronicle office, not only locally but an immense amount of advertising from Columbia and other nearby cities as the paper was getting up such a reputation that it was not just confined to local readers. Foreign advertising agents kept getting orders to place the advertising of a great many prominent firms in the Chronicle. Business got so good that another typesetting machine was ordered and he bought his news print by the car load.

Some of Frank's friends asked him, if he were not afraid the Ku Klux would get after him, but he smiled and said, he thought not.

The county went Republican at the election and the Democratic legislature made a special case of that county's sheriff and passed a law placing him on a salary.

All of these things noted were done by native sons in order to "Make Democracy Safe."

The other city paper made a very scathing editorial upon Frank for these utterances and in it he said: "Our young Yankee friend had better go back North where he belongs, this is a Democratic state and we are going to see to it that it stays Democratic. We have no use for such renegades as he is and the sooner he folds his tent and skips the gutter, the better it will be for him. No one asked him to come down here and try to instruct us how to conduct matters. We were able to run our affairs before he came down here and we think we can do so now without any of his assistance."

Frank came back at him as follows, "Our worthy and gentlemanly competitor undoubtedly feels somewhat peeved over

one of our editorials and comes back at us in a personal way. Now we always hate to be personal but the venerable dame seizes her ligumvitae mop stick and comes back at us with a front page editorial that smells of sulphur and vitrol and sizzles like a million volts of double distilled electricity toying with a street car mule. The old lady out Jezebels Jezelbel. She overdoes Termagant. She makes Xantippe appear like a soft-voiced country maiden cooing at her first mash.

A grandma of Sumner journalism lets down her back hair and strips for a finished fight. She's more awful in her anger than Macbeth brought to bay. Ajax defying the lightning sinks into significance. The indignation of the Earl of Essex when slapped by the Virgin Queen, the fine scorn of O'Connell when kangarooed by an adverse court were as pink lemonade to prohibition poison compared with the Old Dame's defiance unto death. She intends to drink hot blood, to make an awful example of us. But ere she does anything else, we would like to ask her how she ever fixed up about her stealing that mule down in Mississippi. When she does this we will be ready for her to make a start. However, for her edification, we will state that we are a native son of Sumner and that she is an outlawed Mississippian, and that she skipped the country and came here to keep from going to jail. If she desires any more information about herself to be given to the public, all she has to do is to indicate the same. However, we think, this will hold her for a while."

The edition of the Chronicle was grabbed up like hot cakes and the fury of the editor of the other paper was fierce and he was writhing in torment and torture.

Some of his special friends advised him to go gunning for him. "Not me, he is younger than I am and he is reported to be an expert with a gun."

"Then, why don't you sue him for libel?"

"Well, sirs, I might do that but I do not care to stir up old sores."

"Then, you must have stolen the mule and skipped the country. We are through with you if you have such a streak of yellow about you and are forced to believe that what the

Yankee editor says about you is true. You had better primed your powder before you shot. We all have come to the conclusion that the young man is telling the truth about things being done around here. In fact we know they are, but we imagined that you were heavy enough to hold his nose to the grindstone, but we now see our mistake. Good day."

He was the laughing stock of the whole city and he made it a point to stay out of sight as much as possible until things resumed their normal condition. But, he was very much nonplussed at the way his business commenced to fall off and that of his competitor increase.

No answer was made to Frank's editorial. In the next week's Chronicle, Frank had an editorial, as a 'rubber in," in which he made the statement, "that all the blockaders and bootleggers in the town of Sumner and the county, were native sons, and he dared his competitor to deny the same."

Still no answer was forthcoming. It was very evident that 'Grandma' had had a sufficiency.

An event transpired that gave Frank another opportunity to rub it in on the native son theory.

An army officer left Raleigh for Columbia, S. C. He picked up a couple of men who were afoot and they asked him for a ride, they told him they were going to Columbia. They were both former soldiers.

When they got into South Carolina they shot him to death and threw his body in a swamp and the birds picked his body clean of all flesh within two weeks. They took his car and all his belongings. In about ten days one of them was caught with some of the Major's clothing. When given the third degree, he confessed, implicating another man, who was arrested later on in a neighboring state. They were both native sons.

This squelched all argument on the native son theory and all were of the same opinion as Shakespeare, 'A man's a man for ah that, and ah that.'

CHAPTER XXVI

The Chronicle was enjoying a great amount of prosperity. Its circulation was gradually climbing with a good steady increase and the reason of it was on account of its breezy write ups on the different events.

We will reproduce one of them which may cause our readers to see the humor about it.

It appears that a society bud in a neighboring town sued a young man for kissing her. The jury, all old bachelors, who had been deprived all their lives of kisses, were naturally opposed to other men having luxuries that they did not. So they brought in a verdict of $5,000 for just one kiss.

The Chronicle had this to say about it.

"Just think of it a jury has brought in a verdict against a jay in our neighboring town for $5,000 for 'kissing a woman against her will.' Here's a pretty kettle of fish. When asked to osculate, a woman invariably declines. She resists pressure and says, 'Please don't'—even threatens to scream. How is a fellow to know whether she means it or not, or is merely making a grandstand play? Not every man is a mind reader. A fellow hates to overlook a bet, and be voted a variegated chump by a pretty woman who has had her mouth puckered for him an week; yet if he swoops down upon the sweetness like a drunken bumble bee rifling a red holly hock, his pleasure is marred by visions of damage suits and public ridicule. That must give us pause and leave half the kiss crop of the country to go ungathered. Five thousand dollars for one kiss —when the miserable usurer had oodles of 'em in stock, which she was wasting on other women and colicky kids. It doesn't look right. Five thousand—and we don't know whether he placed it where it would do the most good, lost it among her ear muffs, as is the custom of big brothers, or slid down the

back of her neck, a la the heroes of the stage. It is not even stated whether he snatched it on the fly, like a man reaching for a railroad lunch, or took half an hour to let the sweetness soak in. We have not read the evidence submitted to the court, and know not upon what the plaintiff based her plea for damages—whether it was the kiss per se or the manner in which the goods were delivered that constituted the casus belli. We rather expect, however, that the defendant wore a mustache through which he had been straining moonshine and mock-turtle soup; that he grabbed the plaintiff like a boy at a country fair seizing the greased pig, mussed her hair, deranged her ribbons and crumpled her dress, only to leave on her larboard cheek a red spot smelling of plug tobacca, brilliantine and booze. Under such circumstances a woman should be awarded a million dollars damages and instructed to collect it with a shot gun.

"But this verdict is a dangerous precedent, no doubt; still, the man who knows how to kiss a pretty woman will seldom get into court. Due preparation should be made for the sacred rite by carefully calsomining the teeth, sand-papering the chin and disinfecting the breath. 'Then catch your hare.' Lead her out into the dewy garden about 11 P. M. and watch until the moon slides behind a cloud. Then slip one arm about her taper waist and draw her gently but firmly to your manly bricket. Of course she will murmur 'Don't:' but never mind. Tilt her chin at an angle of forty-five degrees—not suddenly, as though you were trying to crack her neck, but adroitly, imperceptibly. Don't be in a hurry. Give her time to wonder what's going to happen next. Be sure the bull dog is tied and the old man comfortably settled for the night. A fellow's nerves must be in good condition to really enjoy a kiss. Now's your time. Don't peck at the persimmon like a shanghi chicken picking corn, but settle down upon her lips like a carrier pigeon coming home to roost. Don't be in a hurry. She wants to call you a 'naughty man' and threaten to 'tell ma;' but don't give her a chance. She'll forget it if you only keep her mouth engaged until the moon peeps out from behind the cloud. Of course she'll tell you that you are the first man that

ever kissed her,—but you ain't. She'll protest she's real angry, but she'll not sue you for damages. She'll be too busy looking for another cloud to even think about the courts."

But what did the Governor of South Carolina say to the Governor of North Carolina? "It is a long time between drinks."

It is a little different here. But there is a wide divergency upon our topics.

In an editorial in The Chronicle, the following appeared.

It is generally conceded that local newspapers, especially stand for the general uplift of their community, and should work hand in hand with the ministers of the Gospel and the superintendent and teachers in the schools. In most towns this is the case, but here in Sumner none of these mentioned even had had the courtesy to even call at The Chronicle office, much less to give the paper any news concerning the churches or the schools.

Why, they would not even give the paper when asked, their schedule of weekly services. Frank could not explain it to himself satisfactorily, only on the ground of the native son theory.

About all the ministers in that vicinity were native sons and of course were of the prevailing political belief. And they appeared to think that no zone outside their political belief would go to Heaven. If they happened to get in by some hook or crook, they would be a minority party. However, Frank believed that a man who treated his fellowmen with proper respect, paying his honest debts, treating his family alright, did not drink booze, did not gamble, did not run after strange Gods, was not a he-flapper, was just as good, if not better than a church member, who was guilty of all the crimes in the decalogue and he did not hesitate to say so with emphasis. In fact, he had no use for a hypocrite, one who attends church in the forenoon on Sunday and sits in the amen corner and in the afternoon goes out motoring and speeding, and the other six days of the week, trying to skin his neighbor by subterfuge in his deals.

Of course his editorial got a "rise" out of some whom it hit

in the "solar-plexus," and they were very much riled up over it and they made threats what they were going to do, but it all went off as gentle as a mild June breeze.

Several very threatening letters were sent to him through the local post office and Frank had every reason to suppose that the postmaster, who was a hold over and was holding on by reason of the civil service rules, although strong efforts had been made by the anti-machine people to get him removed but to no avail, was possibly indirectly a party to these letters. So he made up his mind to notify the department at Washington and see if something might be done to catch the underhand, sneaking, murderous miscreant.

He had been putting off writing to the department for some little time, but going to the office for his mail, he found another of those letters, which was more threatening than the others and it wound up by saying if nothing was heard from it within a week, he would get another which would be self convincing that he do something and that within twenty-four hours after receiving it.

This settled it. He telegraphed to the department to send a man, who was an expert in detecting irregularities and at once.

As soon as a man could get in from the nearest point to Sumner, he made his appearance and called at The Chronicle office and made himself known to Frank.

The matter was gone over thoroughly and all the letters examined closely and they were all in the same hand writing, but evidently disguised as they were in back hand.

The inspector suggested to Frank that he go over to the other paper and pretend to be a circulation promoter, so as to allay any suspicion of his calling at The Chronicle office.

The inspector made it a point to be around the post office about mailing time and to see if he might catch on. He asked Frank if he suspicioned any one and he was told that there were three men whom he suspected. These men were pointed out to the inspector so he could watch their operations.

He was there for several days and nothing suspicious had occurred until the day before the week was up for the last let-

ter to be sent.

As the inspector went into the postoffice he saw one of the three men whom he was watching, standing on the corner above the postoffice. He saw him motion to a little negro boy to come to him. He saw him give him something. The inspector hastened into the office and awaited for the negro boy to come in as he suspected he had a letter from the man to mail. His suspicions were well founded. The inspector stood near the place where the letters were dropped and the negro boy did not know just where to drop it. So the inspector seeing his predicament, called him up to him and said: "I will mail your letter for you." The boy gave him the letter and he glanced at it and saw that it was one of the letters he was trying to trace.

He then went out of the office and watched proceedings.

He slowly wended his way within hearing distance and he heard the man ask the negro if he mailed it and he told him he did. He gave him a piece of money and the boy started down the street with the inspector keeping him in sight. As he turned the corner, he caught up with him and stopping him, told him he wanted him to do an errand and at the same time gave him a quarter.

He sent him over to The Chronicle office with a note to Frank, to hold the negro boy there until he came over.

He soon made it convenient to get over to The Chronicle office and tell Frank what had happened.

"Now, you go to the office at once and get your mail and if the letter is not in your box, tell the postmaster that there is one in the undelivered box, and that you would like to have it at once. If he is unwilling to accommodate you, I will follow right along after and we will see that he does give it to you, and insist upon his canceling the stamp ere he gives it to you."

Frank followed instructions and the postmaster refused to give him the letter and told him he would have to wait until the next mail was distributed. The inspector overheard the conversation and he rapped upon the door of the office where the postmaster and Frank were. The former opened the door and the inspector stepped inside. "People generally have to

have an invitation ere they intrude into an office," said the postmaster.

"What's your business?"

"I am an interested party in that letter Mr. Butler wants," remarked the inspector.

"Well, sir, you will have to wait my pleasure," answered the postmaster.

"Then, you refuse to produce the letter?" snapped the inspector.

"Yes, sir, I do. "And I order you out of this office at once," replied the postmaster hotly.

Turning the lapel of his coat over, the inspector displayed a badge that indicated his authority.

"Do you think that will cause you to change your mind about producing that letter and that instanter?" asked the inspector.

"Why, did you not tell me who you were when you came in?" whined the postmaster.

"I wanted to see how you treated your customers, who were not your regular buddies," answered the inspector.

The postmaster got the letter and handed to the inspector. "You will have to cancel the stamp, as we want proof that it went through the mails," said the inspector.

"You will please keep this matter 'sub-rosa,' if you value your position, and I will see you later," remarked the inspector and he and Frank left the office.

They went to The Chronicle office and opened the letter and found it far more threatening than the others. They immediately went before the U. S. Commissioner and swore out a warrant for the sender, who was one of the most prominent machine politicians in town and also a very wealthy man.

The warrant was given to the sheriff and Mr. Politician was in the toils of Uncle Sam before he knew it. He was placed under a $10,000 bond to appear at the next federal court.

The inspector telegraphed the department in cipher, asking what to do about the postmaster. Orders were at once telegraphed to relieve him of his duties at once and have a reliable man, who was an administration man appointed tem-

porarily in his place and until the man was appointed t. e inspector was to have charge of the office.

This last move of Frank's put the quietus upon practically all opposition. The man was tried and given ten years in the federal prison at Atlanta.

Shortly after this, Frank got word from the Comm re that Mamie Simmons had been killed in France, when os- pital had been shelled.

The Chronicle enjoyed great prosperity and ver. el n was native son mentioned any more, and surely Fr k h d lost his identity as a native son.

We will now leave him to enjoy himself with his fam y and in a community where about every one fully appreciated the fact that he was a true man in every respect.

— THE END —

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